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ABSTRACT

The efforts of national organizations, whether governmental or voluntary, to promote conservation and to develop public awareness and sympathy will be successful only in proportion to the extent that people identify these efforts with their own quality of life. This report focuses on the main theme of the conference held in May, 1985, by the North West Europe Committee of the Commission on Education of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Chapters include: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "Preparation of the Conference"; (3) "Presentation of Keynote Papers and Discussion"; (4) "Introduction to the Organization of Voluntary Groups"; (5) "Summary of the Final Discussions on the Ideas, Materials and Methods Presented during the Conference"; and (6) "Retrospection and Proposals for Further Action." Appendices include 12 papers that were presented at the conference, discussions following the presentations of papers, reports from work groups, and a list of the participants. (CW)

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Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Environmental Education through Local Groups

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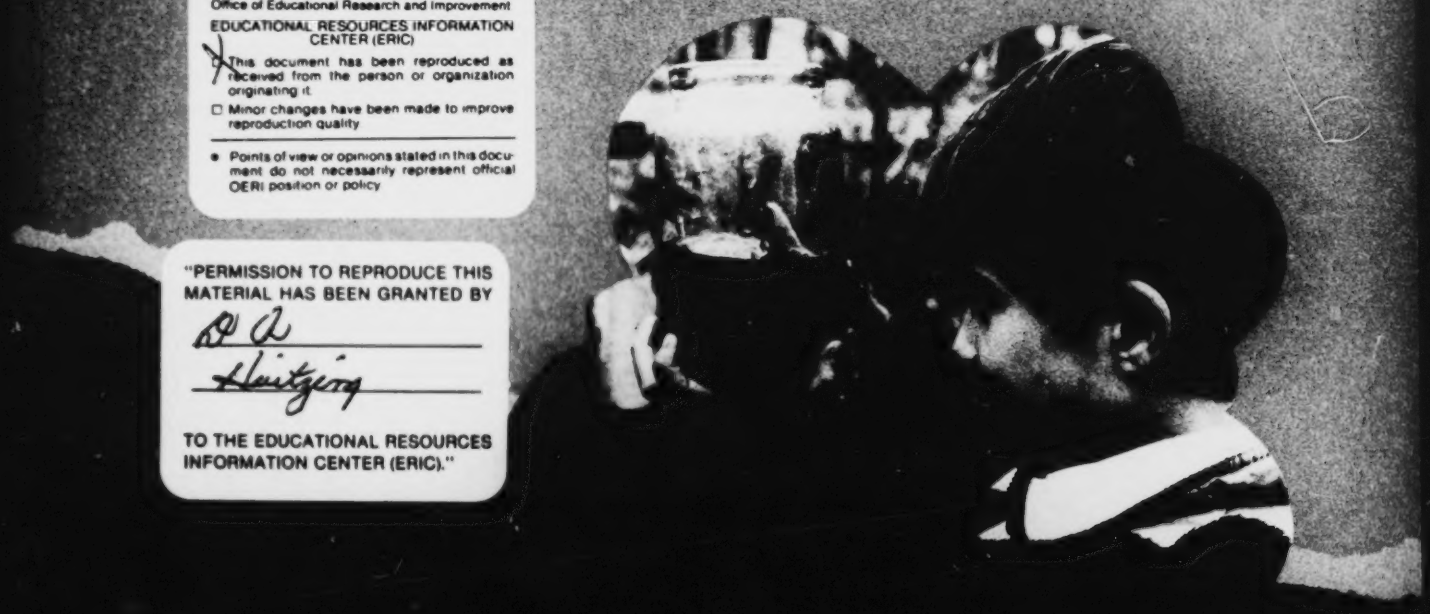

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Report on the 1985 conference

"ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS", May 13/16, 1985, HEEZE, the Netherlands.

Conference of the North West Europe Committee, (NWEC), Commission on Education

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

February 15th, 1988, edited by D.A. Huitzing

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, THE NETHERLANDS.

Direction for Nature Conservation, Environmental Protection and Wildlife Management.
P.O. Box 20401, 2500 EK The Hague

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Paper No. 1 (general introduction; D.A. Huitzing)

"Introduction: On the role of voluntary associations in environmental education and their relation to the IUCN Programme on Education" (13 pages)

(Please note that the original appendix to Paper No.1 is not included. This appendix consisted of a letter from the Dutch Minister of Education and Science, Mr. W.J. Deetman, to the

Lower House of the States-General on activities in the field of environmental education (No. 18 234 nr. 1 of February 2, 1984). The contents of this Letter is at present outdated. It has been followed by a more comprehensive Letter on Environmental Education (No. 18 234, nr. 2, dated June 27, 1986), which has been translated into English and has been mailed amongst others to members of North West Europe Committee.)

Paper No. 2 A (The Netherlands; D.A. Huitzing)

"The environmental educational programme of local groups, aimed at the general public." (8 pages)

Paper No. 2 B (Belgium; P. Stryckers)

"Environmental education programmes of local groups aimed at the general public" (6 pages)

Paper No. 3 (general purpose; ir. Chr. Maas Geesteranus)

"Educating locally, thinking globally" (10 pages)

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"How to organize environmental education by voluntary groups at the local level" (11 pages)

Paper No. 4 B (Belgium: P. Stryckers)

"Organization of local environmental education groups" (2 pages)

Paper No. 5 A (The Netherlands, S. Klaaijsen)

"The training of local EE Volunteers. An outline ot the training in local branches of the IVN, the national organization of environmental education in the Netherlands" (12 pages)

Paper No. 5 B (Belgium, P. Stryckers)

"The training of local environmental education groups"
(3 pages)

Paper No. 6 A (The Netherlands, A. Schut)

"Supporting local EE groups at regional level"
(5 pages)

Paper No. 6 B (Belgium, P. Stryckers)

"Support of local EE groups in Belgium"
(4 pages)

Paper No. 7 A (The Netherlands, J.M. Klaaijsen, with a contribution of Mrs. E. Blok)

Part I "Developing teaching materials and methods and teacher training courses at national level"

Part II "Contribution to the discussion: How to organize and support a volunteers EE-organzation"
(17 pages)

Paper No. 7 B (Belgium, P. Stryckers)

"Development at national level of teaching materials and methods for courses conducted by local EE groups"
(5 pages)

Appendix 2

Discussion on May 13th, 1985, following the presentation of papers; including reports from working groups. (10 pages)

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PREFACE

The North West Europe Committee of the Commission on Education in one of the longest established components of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). It provides a regular meeting place for environmental educators from its members countries, where they can study matters of common concern in the region, exchange experiences and strengthen cooperation between their various organizations. The annual meeting is often accompanied by a conference designed to draw in other participants especially from the host country.

There can be no doubt that the meeting and conference held in May 1985 at the Kapellerput Education Centre in Heeze, near Eindhoven in the Netherlands, was a particularly outstanding example which will be long remembered. The subject of Environmental Education through Local Groups is an important one for us all. The model for its development offered and so well presented at this meeting by our Dutch and Belgian colleagues was an inspiration, backed as they were with great convinction by members of the local community in which the meeting was held.

The efforts of national organizations, whether governmental, quasi-governmental or voluntary, to promote conservation and to develop public awareness and sympathy, will eventually be succesful only in proportion to the extent and depth of local feeling, and to the degree to which people identify these efforts locally with their own quality of life. Those of us who sometimes feel that we are struggling vainly against a current of commercial pressures, short-term perspectives and selfish materialism can only be refreshed and stimulated by the successes of IVN and CVN reported here. To quote from a report written by one of the participants after the meeting: "It is difficult not to be overwhelmed by the scale of the organization and the commitment of those involved." Many of us went home asking ourselves how we might set about fostering comparable developments.

To our hosts who set up such a rewarding conference, and who have thereafter assembled this valuable account of it, we owe a great debt of gratitude. It will be the greatest compliment to them if we can see a further growth of this kind of initiative elsewhere in North West Europe.

J.C. Smyth,

Chairman of NWEC, 1980-85.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In May, 1985, a conference on "Environmental education through local groups" was held in Heeze, the Netherlands.

Due to various circumstances, in particular an excess in workload and lack of time to cope with it, no proceedings were published immediately or shortly after the conference. Other activities had to be given - and were given - higher priority. However, after two years I have finally found the time to assemble a report from collected papers, notes and tapes.

This report focuses almost exclusively on the main theme of the conference: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS. The first chapter is an introduction to this report. Chapter II is devoted to the preparation of the conference. Chapter III and Chapter IV both deal with presentations of keynote papers and other introductions. In Chapter V a summary is given of the final discussion session and Chapter VI offers a retrospection as well as proposals for further action.

Apart from activities, presentations and discussions on the main theme, there were also many interesting personal contributions. Participants will no doubt remember this. These were sometimes more or less related to the main theme and sometimes not related at all.

Clearly, one of the attractive aspects of this kind of conferences is the fact that they give lots of opportunities for exchanging ideas and experiences. These have been intensively used in Heeze. However, the aim of the conference was to demonstrate how issues like those raised by the World Conservation Strategy could be presented to the general public through local environmental education groups. This was the main theme of the conference and this should be the focus of attention in this report too. Furthermore, personal contributions reflecting topics of the day in 1985 do not have to be of interest in 1988. This, added to the fact that not all personal contributions were well recorded and to the risk of the report becoming too extensive, has led to the decision not to include personal contributions.

Far from being new, the main theme is not yet outdated. Local groups in Belgium and the Netherlands have been active in the field of environmental education for many years and with great success. The concept behind this methodology could be used in many other countries. Therefore, environmental education through local groups will remain an important topic for the IUCN Commission on Education for the years to come. This, again, is an argument for concentrating on the main theme of the conference.

Of course, one cannot simply take a concept that has germinated and grown - and still grows and flourishes - in a particular cultural situation and transplant it to another, different cultural situation. Such a thing rarely works. It has taken many years before the environmental education activities of local associations in the Netherlands and in Belgium acquired their present elaborated forms. They have developed out of less complicated activities that started in the early sixties, partly even before the second world war. Developments have not yet reached their final stage and will certainly continue.

What one can do is to analyze such a concept and find out of what elements it is constituted. Some of these elements can be tailored to the cultural context of other countries. It will mean exerting oneself, but this will certainly pay. This is something participants in this conference - and the other readers of this report - might want to do, after having persuaded themselves of the usefulness of the concept. No doubt Dutch and Belgian practitioners are willing to help. Yet one should not underestimate the time and energy needed to develop a kind of adaptation that really works.

With regard to the conference itself, I remember that we proceeded with somewhat decreasing possibilities for recording what happened. The causes of this phenomenon were partly beyond control and partly a result of underestimating this aspect of the conference. However, it was inversely proportional to the number and quality of the discussions that took place. So some improvisation was needed and this resulted in many interesting products called group reports. These reports contain many valuable ideas, points of view and opinions and have been included as much as possible. So some of them can be found in chapters of this report and other ones in the appendixes.

I do hope this report will reflect some of the rather abundant enthusiasm, energy, inquisitiveness, critical attitudes and eagerness to learn that was felt at the HEEZE-conference. In my opinion these are some of the elements to be cherished most in developing environmental education.

D.A. Huitzing,
May 1987 / February 1988.

Thanks are due to the Translation Group of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

CHAPTER II

PREPARATION OF THE CONFERENCE

2.1. Why organize a conference on environmental education through local groups ?

The North West Europe Committee (NWEC), a subcommittee of the IUCN Commission on Education, has been organizing conferences for many years. Conferences are considered as an effective way to exchange ideas and experiences between people involved in environmental education. By turns some NWEC-members in one of the North West European Countries work hard to present an interesting programme for a conference. Often such a meeting is not only attended by NWEC-members from other countries, but by many interested non-members as well. As a subject matter for conferences often a typical conservation issue or a kind of environmental problem is chosen, as these kinds of topics are regarded as fundamental ingredients of environmental education.

However, the conference reported upon here departs from what has almost become a tradition. The question how local environmental groups, solitary or cooperating in a kind of network, can work effectively in environmental education is altogether a different one, which has not much to do with contents. It is a question with strategic aspects as well as many methodological aspects. It is a HOW question rather than a WHAT question. (1) Such a digression of course has to be explained. This already has been done in the letter of invitation and that line of thought will be followed in this report, by reproducing the original letter of invitation.

2.1.1. The letter of invitation

It has often been thought that the environmentalists' message can reach the general public via the mass media. This, however, is apparently not the case, at least not enough. The idea behind this conference is that the general public should also be reached through local environmental education groups. Both strategies supplement each other. The aim of this conference, therefore, is to demonstrate how issues like those raised by the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) can be presented to the general public through local self-organizing associations which bring in and train voluntary members to organize educational activities for the public. (1)

In order to do so, local environmental education (EE) groups have to fulfil a number of conditions. One condition is that there should be quite a lot of local EE-groups, because a few scattered ones cannot do the job. Furthermore it is necessary that local groups cooperate in some kind of regional or even

national network. Other necessary conditions cannot be fully explained here, but it will be clear that the scope of the conference is wider than the activities of local EE-groups alone. The connections with regional and national organizations will also be explored.

Local EE-groups have been active in the Netherlands and Belgium since about 1960. (2) Many of these groups have been incorporated in national associations such as the Centre for Environmental Education (in Dutch: CVN, Belgium) and the Institute for Environmental Education (in Dutch: IVN, the Netherlands). Participaton in national associations increases unity among the various local groups and at the same time national and international influence and significance. In order to strengthen their organizations with enthusiastic, trained and well-informed members these local EE-groups organize various courses, for instance nature guide courses. At the same time the local organizations also organize exhibitions, nature walks, excursions, work camps and slide shows. Furthermore they produce some teaching materials. The activities of the local associations are supported by regional and national organizations, especially by regional EE-consultants.

At the conference the system described above will be examined through the following main topics:

1. The educational programme of local EE-groups
2. How to organize local EE-groups
3. The contents and organization of training activities for EE-volunteers
4. The support of local EE-groups by regional EE-consultants and national EE-organizations

The objectives of the World Conservation Strategy, especially as interpreted for a European audience, will guide the contents of the conference.

Outdoor activities

It will be clear that EE-activities at the local level cannot be sufficiently explained on paper and in discussions alone. Therefore the IVN Noord-Brabant training team (3) will make arrangements for a number of outdoor EE-activities in which participants of the conference will be able to actually experience such activities. These outdoor activities will be typical of such activities of local EE-groups in the Netherlands and Belgium, for instance nature walks for the general public or guided excursions for schoolchildren.

In this way the participants will get an impression of the methods used as well as of the contents of such activities. It is far from easy to give in a few words a complete picture of the ingredients of EE-activities of local voluntary groups, because so many subjects receive attention in these activities. Furthermore the contents to be chosen very much depends on age, interest, ability and previous knowledge of the target group.

However, in general the subjects chosen are related to areas such as nature conservation, environmental protection, landscape management, animals and plants living in a certain area etcetera.

Discussion papers

The papers mentioned in the programme will be sent to the participants some weeks before the conference starts. As developments in environmental education in the Netherlands and Belgium differ, there will be both Dutch and Belgian papers in most cases.

Participants are kindly requested to read as much as possible, so that short introductions on the topics to be discussed may suffice and most of the time available can be used for discussion. In this way the exchange of ideas and information will be encouraged as much as possible. Some time is also reserved for contributions from participants from countries other than the Netherlands and Belgium. Participants who intend to contribute, for instance concerning EE-activities in their countries, are requested to inform the organizing committee before April 25, 1985, stating the topic of their contribution, the way it will be presented as well the time required for presention. The organizing committee will try to give such contributions a place in the programme, which might not be easy because of the limited time available.

Report

A final report will be prepared after the conference and will be sent to the participants.

Accomodation

Rooms have been reserved for all participants in the educational centre 'Kapellerput', Somerenseweg 100, 5590 AB HEEZE (P.O. Box 57, Phone 04907-1439).

2.2 Programme

Sunday
May 12th, 1985 — Arrival at the Kapellerput Educational Centre

Monday
May 13th, 1985

09.00 hours — Opening of the meeting
Excursion to the "Groote Peel" nature reserve. After often a long voyage it does not seem a good idea to start the conference sitting and listening. An excursion is a more active way to begin with. It provides opportunities for the participants to make or to renew acquaintances, as well as to visit a remarkable marsh area, the Groote Peel nature reserve. The process of turning this area into a National Park has just been started. Wardens of the State Forest Service will give information on this nature reserve.

12.30 hours — Lunch, offered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

14.00 hours — Presentation of key-note papers:
"The environmental education programme of local groups, aimed at the general public"
No 2a - The Netherlands (D.A. Huitzing)
No 2b - Belgium (P. Stryckers)
In these two papers a concise description is given of EE-activities of local groups. The main point is that the educational activities are not intented for the group's own members but for others.
Note: Paper no 1 serves as a background paper for the conference and discussionpoints for this session may be taken from it.

"Eduction locally, thinking globally"
(paper no 3) (Chr. Maas Geesteranus)

In this paper the relationship is explored between local EE-activities and global problems. Furthermore a more or less ideal picture of EE-activities is given and the project "Energy balance" is explained.

Discussion will take place in groups, guided by discussion points.

17.30 hours — dinner

19.00 hours	Outdoor EE-activity near the centre: experiencing a nature walk aimed at the general public, guided by nature guides. Nature guides of local IVN-groups will first give a short explanation and then we will visit either the " Hubertusbos" (a wood) or the "Sterkselse A" (a lowland brook). The activity can be discussed afterwards: what do people learn from it and what can we learn from it?
Tuesday, May 14th, 1985	
08.30 hours	breakfast
09.00 hours	Introduction to today's programme. Departure by bus: visit to an educational centre run by the local IVN-group, at Valkenswaard.
09.25 hours	Visit to the IVN-Valkenswaard centre; explanation of educational activities
11.00 hours	(at Kapellerput again): "How to organize environmental education at the local level?" (paper no 4a) (D.A. Huitzing) The organization of local EE-groups in Belgium (paper no 4b) (P. Stryckers) discussion This part of the programme focusses especially on the necessary conditions for running a local EE-group.
12.30 hours	lunch
14.00 hours	"The training of local EE-volunteers" (paper no: 5a The Netherlands) (J.M. Klaaijsen) (paper no: 5b Belgium) (P. Stryckers) In this part of the programme we will examine how local groups can give new members the knowlegde and skills necessary for the fulfilment of educational tasks. Teaching materials used in various courses will be available, as well as other educational materials from the IVN.
17.30 hours	dinner
19.00 hours	Outdoor EE-activity: using the senses. In the neighbourhood of the Centre the participants will work at tasks designed by the Environmental Education Centre at Eindhoven for EE at primary schools.

Wednesday
May 15th, 1985

08.30 hours	breakfast
09.00 hours	Introduction to today's programme. Departure by bus: visit to the educational centre at Geldrop, run by the local IVN-group.
09.15 hours	At the local educational centre: explanation of educational activities.
10.30 hours	(at Kapellerput again). "Supporting local E.E. groups from the regional level" Paper no 6a (the Netherlands) (A. Schut) (regional EE-consultant) Paper no 6b (Belgium) (P. Stryckers) In this part of the programme a picture is given of how the support of local EE-groups from the regional level works and which results one may expect from it. Discussion
12.30 hours	lunch
14.00 hours	Presentations of EE-activities and ideas by participants of EE-activities from their own countries (provisional order of presentation) including: - the training of police-officers as an example of a aspecial target group (A. Schut) - Environmental education in England (John Baines) - Environmental education in Norway (Astrid Sandas) - Environmental education in Sweden (Anne van Hofsten) - Conservation Action Project in the Peak National Park (Peter Townsend) - Nature conservation and interpretation projects in jobcreation (Torben Sønnichsen)
17.30 hours	dinner
19.00 hours	Presentations of EE-activities and ideas by participants of EE-activities for their own countries, including: - environmental education in YEE (Youth and Environment Europe - Derk Willem Byvanck) - environmental education in Scotland (I.P. Pascoe) - local environmental protection and environmental education in Denmark (Claus Helweg Ovensen) - the RSPB's contribution to environmental education in the U.K. (David Elcome) - the Keep Britian Tidy Group environmental education programme (Cherry Mares)

Thursday,
May 16th, 1985

08.30 hours	breakfast
09.00 hours	Developing teaching materials and methods on the national level for courses run by local E.E. groups Paper no 7 a (the Netherlands) (J.M. Klaaijsen) (to be distributed later on) Paper no 7b (Belgium) (P. Stryckers) Discussion
11.30 hours	Preparation of questions for the final discussion session
12.30 hours	lunch
14.00 hours	Summary of the topics discussed at the conference, general discussion on the ideas about materials and methods that have been presented, conclusions and recommendations for further action, evaluation of the conference. Ideas, questions and draft recommendations following form the topics discussed during this conference can be presented to a panel comprising of the bureau members and office-bearers of the NWEC: Professor J.C. Smyth, Prof. Dr. H. Köpp, Mr. J. Baines, Mr. C. Helweg Ovesen and Mr. E. Kesteloot. This panel will try to formulate short conclusions on the points raised.
17.30 hours	Official dinner, offered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. End of the conference

2.2. The Organizing Committee and others who helped to organize the conference

The conference was organized by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Directorate for Nature Conservation. Environmental Protection and Wildlife Management, together with the CNBE (State Committee for Environmental Education) and the IVN (Institute for Environmental Education), with support from the Belgian EE-association CVN.

Members of the organizing committee were:

Mr. J.M. Klaaijsen	consultant for training activities, national bureau of IVN
Mr. Chr. Maas Geesteranus	secretary of the CNBE
Mr. P.J.A. van Mensch	teacher and member of the CNBE
Mr. J. van de Nieuwenhof	voluntary member of the IVN Noord-Brabant training team, member of the IVN national board
Mr. K. Schilder	educational officer at the Kapellerput Centre
Mr. D.A. Huitzing	environmental education officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Many others contributed to the the conference and its related activities. Thanks are due to:

Mr. P. Stryckers	CVN (Centre for Environmental Education), Antwerp, Belgium
Mrs. E. Blok	IVN Noord-Brabant training team
Mrs. L. Keysper	IVN Noord-Brabant training team
Mr. W. Kornet	Environmental Education Centre, Eindhoven

Mr. A. Schut	IVN, EE-consultant for the province of Noord-Brabant
Mr. R.E. de Vringer	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (at the time of the conference. Now IVN national bureau, Amsterdam)
Mrs. C. Vincent	nature guide, IVN Heeze-Leende
Mr. E. Kuypers	nature guide, IVN Heeze-Leende
Mr. H. van Litsenburg	nature guide, IVN Heeze-Leende
Mr. E. Weijters	nature guide, IVN Valkenswaard
Mr. J. Kerstens	nature guide, IVN Valkenswaard

and numerous other members of the local IVN-associations of Geldrop, Valkenswaard and Heeze-Leende.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, The Hague, The Netherlands.

NOTES
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1) To examine what the contents of environmental education are is extraordinarily important, there is no doubt about that. But what contents to choose is not the only question one has to consider. It is not enough to have a clear and concise message, because those aspects do not guarantee that the message will be noticed by the audience. Yet strategic, methodological and organizational questions tend to be underestimated in environmental education. If one wants to make environmental education more effective, a lot of work has to be done with regard to these questions. The environmentalist's 'war' can be seen as one of organization, as D. Scott Slocombe does, but that includes creative thinking - and its application - to strategics and methodology.

   See: D. Scott Slocombe, 'ENVIRONMENTALISM: A MODERN SYNTHESIS', The Environmentalist, 4 (1984) page 281-285

2) A number of local associations were established even before or shortly after the second world war.

3) The IVN (Institute for Environmental Education) is a Dutch EE-association with about 150 local EE-groups. In the province of Noord-Brabant the regional IVN-board has formed a regional training team to stimulate training activities. This IVN Noord-Brabant training team contributed to various parts of the conference programme, e.g. the outdoor EE-activities. The village of Heeze, where the conference took place, is in the province of Noord-Brabant.

Chapter III

PRESENTATION OF KEYNOTE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

(May 13th, 1985)

Note: This chapter consists of three parts:

- 3.1. Presentation of keynote papers
- 3.2. Educating locally, thinking globally
- 3.3. Brief report on topics discussed

Reports of working groups, discussion methods used as well as personal reactions to the topics presented can be found in appendix No. 2.

3.1. Presentation of keynote papers

The studying of the main topics of the conference started in the afternoon of Monday, May 13th, with the presentation of two keynote papers, both entitled "The environmental education programme of local groups, aimed at the general public".

Mr. D.A. Huitzing had based his paper on the experiences of local groups in the Netherlands, whereas Mr. P. Stryckers had done the same for Belgium.

In his further general introduction to the conference, Mr. Huitzing emphasized some aspects of a predicament not unknown to environmental educators. Environmental education is a complex subject, with many still unanswered questions, loose ends and assumptions that are possibly only partly reflected.

The organization of a conference on environmental education can therefore be compared to a situation often facing environmental educators: there are so many interesting subjects, there is so much to tell about every subject, there are so many questions and topics to be discussed, but time is lacking to do all that seems necessary. There is no choice but to select.

Choices have to be made with respect to three questions, which are some of the main questions in environmental education.

The first is the question of goals and aims. This has not only to do with specific aims, but also with more general ones, with ideals and even with what can be called a philosophy of education.

The second question refers not to ends but to means and to organizational affairs. Roughly it is the question of who is going to do the job and how it has to be done.

The environment and related problems offer so many learning opportunities, that the third question is not an easy one. It is the question of making an intelligent choice of what to teach and to whom, that is how to construct a workable curriculum for environmental education. What is lacking is some kind of guidance about which subjects are suitable - or necessary ? - for which agegroups as weil as guidance about what results one may expect from educational activities.

As so often these are questions that cannot really be answered separately, because they are interrelated. Furthermore it is possible to formulate these questions in many different ways. But developing environmental education always means trying to find answers to these questions.

Choosing a theme for a conference, what the organizing committee has done, for instance is an attempt to answer the third question. This theme has in fact much to do with the second question and it will be clear that all three questions offer abundant opportunities for research, discussions and conferences.

The theme chosen, then, is ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS. It is based on the assumption that local groups furnish fruitful opportunities to reach the public at large, provided there are sufficient local groups working together in some kind of network. This assumption is based on experiences in Belgium and in the Netherlands.

As organizing committee we think that working through local groups is a useful strategy in environmental education. This is our first and most important proposal. For the sake of clarity this has been stated as opposed to working via the mass media. However, not with the intention to criticize the coverage of environmental problems by the mass media. Spreading the message via local groups supplements and reinforces diffusion via the mass media.

Often local groups will be voluntary associations, but not necessarily so. Although there are differences between professional and voluntary organizations, a lot of topics at this conference will be relevant to both types. The resources available to local groups will often be rather limited, but the same applies to professional organizations in the field of environmental education.

In order to reach the general public, local groups need a balanced activities programme, based on two pillars: interest arousing activities and proper environmental education. The first group of activities is intended to create awareness as well as interest, whereas the second group of activities aims to deepen and expand knowledge and interest. Nature walks, short courses, exhibitions, lectures, nature trails, etcetera are used to arouse interest in nature and in nature conservation. Longer courses play a different role. In these courses local EE-groups have the opportunity to present a more comprehensive picture of subjects chosen, whereas participants get more time

to learn what they want to learn. This again is an attempt to deal with the third question mentioned, namely to create time and space for real learning about the environment, in contrast to superficially touching on the subject. An important point is that the educational activities are not intended for the group's own members, but for others. On the other hand there have to be activities aimed at the members too, in order to give them training opportunities and to motivate them once more.

Written information such as given in the keynote papers of how local EE-groups in Belgium and in the Netherlands try to inform the general public tends to remain rather abstract and distant from the reader. For our conference this is insufficient. It is our intention to create a more lively picture of this local EE-work. Because of the fact that reading and discussing alone will not ensure this kind of results, we have made arrangements for some real local EE-activities to participate in. These are nature walks and excursions, guided by nature guides, as well as EE-assignments for primary school childern designed by the nearby Environmental Education Centre at Eindhoven.

3.2. EDUCATING LOCALLY, THINKING GLOBALLY

The next presentation was made by Mr. Maas Geesteranus, who introduced his paper on "Educating locally, thinking globally".

Mr. Maas Geesteranus started by saying that to his regret had not been able to identify voluntary groups working with the book "Energy balance", which has been decribed in his paper. Apparently is it too new to be used by local groups.

Mr. Maas Geesteranus, then reported on the current developments in thinking on environmental education in the State Advisory Committee on Environmental Education. Recently, the goal for environmental education had been re-formulated:

"To enable people to acquire knowledge, insight, attitudes and skills that do justice to the recognition of:

- nature as the source and condition of human existence
- the influence of human acting upon the quality of nature
- the resulting responsibilities

on the basis of which choices can be made with regard to the character of society".

A new aspect hereof is, according to Mr. Maas Geesteranus, the connection between existing environmental problems and the way we shape our society. It should be realized, however, that the actual contribution of environmental education to a juster, cleaner and ecologically more diversified world than it is today, has not yet fully crystallized.

We must also be aware of the fact that environmental problems are political problems, which means they have to be solved by political means. It is thought that the economic system in western industrialized countries exceeds ecological boundaries, however vaguely these may be defined. Mr. Maas Geesteranus said he believed that the way in which economic growth is used to keep the system going is disastrous to nature.

Statements like this one might make people losing all hope, for:

- we have not yet clearly defined our ecological boundaries, nor do we know how flexible they are
- we seem not to have the means, or sufficient insight, to modify a system that reflects the most fundamental human needs
- there are so few people to do the job.

However, educators share at least one thing, which is pedagogic optimism. In education there is always hope for and believe in a future. Furthermore it is clear that nature is the source and the condition of everybody's existence, which is a strong argument in itself.

These facts make Mr. Maas Geesteranus believe, that environmental education as a matter of principle has another task than just telling people about nature and the harm we may do to it. Environmental education must find out how we look at the world, at nature, at our fellow-men and at ourselves. When we have clarified this complex of factors we will have made a major step forward.

Mrs. Nancy Hetzel wrote in one of her articles: "It is of primary importance to study worldviews and incorporate this concept in current research and educational efforts." As Mrs. Hetzel points out, this is because worldviews not only help to define many of the contemporary issues, they are part of the problems. This is particularly the case with respect to the present crisis.

An examination of current worldviews cannot be ignored for several reasons. Firstly there is the realization that the modern industrial worldview is incompatible with the realities of ecological scarcities and the finite earth.

Secondly, the current worldview no longer provides an adequate explanation of the problems and anomalies of the present global crisis. By its very nature, the current worldview which underlies prevailing development models seems to exclude adequate solutions. A basic change in values is thus necessary for the resolution of the current crisis.

This resolution can be accomplished only if there is a basic perceptual shift, so that people understand the interrelationship between all mankind and mother earth, and start to live accordingly. Therefore it is also necessary to

explore alternative paradigms that provide substantially different ways of approaching the problems.

Some aspects of the modern industrial worldview need to be examined more closely. First, this worldview tends to define human needs exclusively in material terms. Second, there is the belief in unlimited growth and material abundance, supported by cheap and also abundant energy, rich natural resources and scientific and technological advances. Nature exists only to be conquered and to serve human interests. Third, the modern industrial worldview employs a reductionistic scientific method, that strives to explain the world in terms of isolated components and not as an interrelated whole. Finally the current worldview does not acknowledge the relationships between our attitudes toward nature, other beings and world peace.

In the opinion of Mr. Maas Geesteranus the ideas voiced by Mrs. Hetzel bring us to the root of the problems. Should we, as educators, confront our targetgroups with their views on man, nature and society during a pleasant trip through the woods ? No, of course not. On page 5 of his paper he has made a more differentiated proposal. Furthermore: we are not only dealing with environmental problems, but also with people. We have to take into account that each individual has his own norms, values, interests and capacities. The art of environmental education, then, is to try and make people receptive to environmental thinking.

Two things were neglected in the past in environmental education. We forgot to clerly define our message and we forgot that education is not a one-sided affair. What remains to be done after identifying so many shortcomings ? The new programme of the IUCN Commission on Education, which is based on the WCS, focuses on four main targetgroups:

- environmental educators themselves
- managers of natural resources
- decision-makers
- the general public.

Mr. Maas Geesteranus ended off his introduction by saying he was unable to choose the most important targetgroup. We have to reach them all, that is, an integrated approach is needed. All these targetgroups must be involved in educational plans and projects. Decision-makers are the forgotten group, which might explain why relatively little seems to have been accomplished through environmental education in the last 25 years.

3.3. BRIEF REPORT ON TOPICS DISCUSSED.

Note: Topics for discussion have been taken from the following papers:

- Paper No. 1 "Introduction: On the role of voluntary associations in environmental education and their relation to the IUCN Programme on Education"
- Paper No. 2 "The environmental education programme of local groups, aimed at the general public"
  (2A - The Netherlands; 2B - Belgium)
- Paper No. 3 "Educating locally, thinking globally".

The discussion in small groups had been prepared by Mr. K. Schilder. At the beginning of the conference the aim of the discussions was not to arrive at well balanced conclusions with practical implications, but rather to achieve a certain general level of knowledge of the main subjects. A review of the discussion methods used, as well as of the group reports is given in appendix 2.

Some of the topics discussed in the various groups were:

- the contents of environmental education
- the relations between environmental education and environmental action
- the relations between environmental education and environmental protection
- the knowledge and skills necessary for working in environmental education, for volunteers as well as for professionals
- the relations between volunteers and professionals
- the relations between educators and their audiences
- identification of targetgroups
- what makes people change their ideas, values and world views ?
- education of decision-makers
- the desired exchange of ideas and knowledge of environmental education
- how can organizations become more effective ?

Many of the questions discussed were explored in detail during the following days of the conference and any more finale conclusions reached will be mentioned further on in this report.

Chapter IV

INTRODUCTION TO THE ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTARY GROUPS

(May 14th, 1985)

At this second day of the conference two important questions will be studied. After yesterday's general introduction to the theme 'environmental education through local groups' and the following reflection on the contents of environmental education, it is time to examine more carefully the subject of organizing local educational activities and have a closer look at the subject of the training of local volunteers. As mentioned before, a visit to the educational centre of a local IVN-group has been included in the programme in order to facilitate the study of these two subjects.

Five papers have been prepared with regard to the two subjects mentioned. The first (No. 4A) by Mr. Huitzing deals in rather general terms with the dynamics of local EE-associations. Following to this Mr. Strijckers gives in his paper (No. 4B) an account of the organization of local EE-groups in Belgium.

The question of the training of local volunteers is dealt with by both Mr. Klaaijsen and Mr. Strijckers. As often during this conference one of the papers describes the way in which this subject is dealt with in the Netherlands (paper No. 5A, by Mr. Klaaijsen), whereas the other one focuses on solutions developed in Belgium (No. 5B, by Mr. Strijckers).

In paper No. 7A, part II, Mr. Klaaijsen further contributes to the discussion on the subject of how to set up a framework for environmental education through voluntary groups. The professional support of voluntary groups should be based on the way in which environmental education through voluntary groups is organized.

When introducing his paper (No. 4A) Mr. Huitzing said that his paper focused on the organization of voluntary groups as opposed to professional organizations. The distinction between professional and voluntary organizations is often regarded as a distinction in expertise. However, this distinction might not be a correct one, because in general members of voluntary organizations have acquired some specific knowledge too, either in various kinds of vocational training, in-service training or otherwise. Volunteers sometimes have equal or even more skills and knowledge than professional workers.

This, however, is not a major point to be discussed. More important are the features voluntary EE-groups have in common as well as the advantages of voluntary EE-associations.

Voluntary associations are, in the opinion of Mr. Huitzing, not a cheap alternative to professional EE-organizations. To say

that we want volunteers to organize environmental education because we cannot pay all the professionals needed is not a good argument, albeit a practical one. At best it is an argument for lack of a better one. A better argument, which is also realistic but more positive, is that voluntary work in the field of environmental education is one of the few possibilities people have to contribute to solutions for environmental problems.

So even if we had all the money we wanted for EE, there still would be a need for voluntary EE-groups. In this respect motivation is the key factor. A local EE-centre run by professionals could of course organize all the activities that are generally provided by local voluntary EE-groups and the staff of such a centre could even ask volunteers to help them doing so. This local EE-centre could organize nature walks, exhibitions, nature guide courses, activities for schools etcetera. The activities would be the same and yet it would not be the same. There would be one vital difference. What is this difference and why is it so important ?

When a local voluntary group organizes educational activities, these activities are activities of their own choice, of their own making and fully their responsibility. It is something that belongs to them. It does not only belong to this very local group, but also to the broader local community, because this local group is part of this community. It could not exist and flourish otherwise. The responsibility for these activities makes the activities so important to the volunteers.

The responsibility entails the motivation, the enthusiasm and willingness to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. We, the members of a local EE-association would say to each other, we have to organize these EE-activities, otherwise they would not take place. Nobody else will do this. Nobody pays us to do so, yet we see it as a necessity. And the public is aware of this, too.

However, nothing of this would be there, or very little, if some outside organization would be responsible for organizing EE-activities. Any of the possibilities, then, to motivate people and to make them feel responsible, would be lost. Local professional EE-organizations, therefore, should cooperate with local voluntary organzations and should not try to replace them.

Behind this line of thought is of course a value. It is the idea that the more people feel responsible for the world they live in, for their neighbourhood for instance, the more they will act in a responsible way towards these matters. Giving responsibility to people generally makes people act in a responsible way. The way local EE-associations take full charge of the organization of their activities is an example of this idea. Moreover, these associations provide many people with opportunities to learn about nature, about the conservation of nature and related subjects. In this way local EE-groups are a formidable motivating force in society, disseminating these ideas, this feeling of responsibility and the acting resulting from this feeling.

Local voluntary groups are a neccessity in environmental education. Important questions therefore are, according to Mr. Huitzing, what is needed to start such a group and to keep it running. In his paper (No. 4A) he has tried to answer these questions in general terms, by describing the dynamics of a newly established local group.

In such a group a sequence of pioneering, differentiation and consolidation can be observed. This is a classical sequence in organization theory, and applies to voluntary organizations as well.

In the pioneering phase all depends on the ability of the handful of persons who start such a group. Their main task is to mobilize help from others, as much as possible, in order to extend the group. The main point in the next phase is to create a stable basis for the future. In order to do so the group has to develop increasingly more different internal functions. Passing through this second phase brings a growing association into the third phase, in which more long term arrangements are made and a long-term policy is formulated, in order to be active in the field of environmental education, at local level, in the long run.

This sounds all very easy, but there is a tremendous lot of work to be done between the first immature ideas before a new EE-group is started and the moment when the active members can say they have got their train going and going steadily. In general this takes a couple of years and not every new group comes this far. But experiences in Belgium and in the Netherlands show that it can be done, and what is more, that such local EE-associations are able to create an high-quality EE-programme during many years and highly valued by their audiences. A network of such local EE-groups can inform the public of environmental matters and is, therefore, an asset to be valued and cherished.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF THE FINAL DISCUSSION OF THE IDEAS, MATERIALS AND METHODS PRESENTED DURING THE CONFERENCE

(May 16th, 1985)

5.1. Selecting topics for discussion

The final discussion took place between the participants and a panel, including Professor J.C. Smyth, Professor Dr. H. Köpp, Mr. J. Baines, Mr. C. Helweg Ovesen and Mr. E. Kesteloot, chaired by Mr. D.A. Huitzing.

Preparations for the final discussions took place in small groups. The groups made a preliminary selection of the most important subjects to be discussed, with the emphasis on:

- questions still to be clarified
- strategic choices in the further development of environmental education
- follow up activities of this conference, by the North West Europe Committee as well as by individual participants at home.

This resulted in the following list of statements and questions, which was presented to the audience by means of large 'flip-over' sheets:

1. How to change a NATURE-STUDY approach in environmental education demonstrated by amongst others IVN nature guides into still positive but MORE PROBLEM-ORIENTED education, taking into account such problems as intensive agriculture, consumption of energy and acid rain ?

2. How to get from LOCAL/NATIONAL to GLOBAL environmental understanding through environmental education, and vice versa ?

3. Which strategies can be used to translate KNOWLEDGE into ACTION in daily life through environmental education ?

   Should we start with promoting better KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF NATURE or with improving HUMAN and SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, thus creating first local and then global SOLIDARITY ?

4. How do we visualize the WORLD CONSERVATION STRATEGY for the general public ?

5. How does the North West Europe Committee work and how could it increase its strength to further develop environmental education ?

Perhaps via national IUCN-groups ?

6. Could we formulate a clear definition of environmental education in relation to target groups ?

7. Could we focus more on the quality of the contents of environmental education programmes ?

8. Could we put more emphasis on the contents of environmental education activities from non-science subjects ?

9. Don't we focus too much on strategies to reach the general public, instead of becoming a 'movement' of local groups in which the 'follow-up' is guaranteed ?

10. How can environmental educators get into the system of adult education ?

11. To where does the field of environmental education extend, from nature conservation to social and cultural work ?

12. How can we deal better with methods of advertisement and make better use of the media to reach the general public ?

13. How can the participants in this conference help each other more permanently by exchanging new methods and experiences ?

14. Should not the role of knowledge in learning processes and group dynamics be more emphasized in environmental education ?

15. Which target groups should be given priority, for instance
    - children (from the age of 4, 6 or 10 ?)
    - youth
    - families
    - general public (whoever that may be)
    - decision-makers, politicians and others
    - environmental educators ?

16. Has the VOLUNTEER APPROACH in environmental education a greater effect than the APPROACH by PROFESSIONALS ? Can both approaches SUPPLEMENT each other ? And what is the best way to do that ?

This large number of questions covering many different aspects of environmental education reflects the wide-ranging and lively discussions that took place in the various discussions groups.

The panel's first task was to select a few general topics out of this abundant list of questions, in order to be able to cope with the coming discussion. An important criterion was of course the relationship with the main theme of the conference: environmental education through local groups. Three general but not always precisely defined topics were selected for the discussion:

1. the category of questions related to strategies for environmental education (questions Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 15 and 16)

2. the category of questions related to contents of environmental education (questions Nos. 4, 7, 8, 11 and 14)

3. the category of questions concerning how we can help each other more in the future and also operate more successfully (questions Nos. 5 and 13).

The large number of questions related to strategies indicates that this aspect clearly was the most important problem the participants had in mind. So it was logical to make a beginning with the discussion on strategies.

5.2. Questions related with strategies for environmental education

With reference to the question HOW TO CHANGE A NATURE STUDY APPROACH into MORE PROBLEM-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION it was argued, that the study of nature is not an end of the environmental education process.

Environmental education should continue into other matters and these are matters of concern for people. Participants of environmental education activities (e.g. in schools or in adult education) are then going to be confronted with some of these problems and hopefully their education will provide the opportunities and abilities to solve some of these problems.

The question can be read as: how do we translate a nature study approach into a problem-solving approach ? The first step could be to find out what the environmental concerns and problems of potential participants are. Still better: let them themselves find out what their own environmental concerns are and work with those first of all. Then you can start to try and solve some of those particular problems. And from there you can go on to some of the more general problems because - as part of the EE-activities - you will be examining links between their own local problems and problems further in the field.

On the other hand, it was commented, it does to some extent depend on where you start.

If you are starting from a group like the independent local groups we have seen here over the last few days, then a natural entry into problem situations would have to come, from the things that are being found in the local environment. It is perhaps not easy nowadays to travel around any part of the West European countryside, especially in more populated areas, without discovering significant or even advanced environmental problems, for instance acid rain or some other form of pollution. Surely people will respond most readily to the

problems that affect them and which they experience directly. Especially, as experiences from Scotland show, in urban communities the starting-point can be an issue, a problem if you like to call it that way. Something about which local people feel strongly. From that starting-point you can establish links to more general problems. But how in practice local problems can be brought as real things about which something actually can be done is a question which requires a lot more research. So sometimes you find groups that start from the problems but perhaps we should not assume that every voluntary local group will start from a general environmental interest.

Another question than the one of how to take people engaged in nature study one step further on the road to environmental concern and action, is the question of how to reach people who are not involved. The guided nature walks organized by the local IVN-groups are an example of this. This is because the public that participates in these nature walks forms what can be called a floating population. There are almost always new participants for whom the nature walk is something like a first meeting with nature. A number of the participants in these nature walks becomes more interested in nature and wants to learn more about it. The nature walk, then, is their starting-point. Later on they may participate in other activities and for instance may take a course. So with the help of this method you do not reach the group already convinced, as is sometimes thought, but you increase the number of people involved in nature conservation and environmental protection.

Furthermore, it should be taken into account that there are different learning styles. Some people for instance have to experience things first before they are able to reflect upon them. Others want to know reasons first, start from ideas or concepts and not so much from empirical data. In environmental education we should offer activities that match the various styles of learning, in order to be able to reach as many people as possible. It is necessary to develop a system to relate activities to learning styles.

With regard to the first question in this category, namely how to change a NATURE STUDY APPROACH into MORE PROBLEM-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, a kind of conclusion can be formulated. The beginning of the educational process might be less important than where it eventually ends. There are groups who are still at what might be called the level of nature study without really seeing any problems and there are also and simultaneously groups who do see the problems but lack knowledge of the natural environment. Both positions, however, are potentially good starting-points for environmental education.

Another question with regard to strategies is the matter of choosing target groups. WHICH TARGET GROUPS SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY ? There are some very outspoken views with regard to this matter. For instance in a book on environmental education the following statement can be read: "If we are to change society's attitude it will only be achieved by concerning children with their environment and so influencing the next

generation of parents." (1) However, is it wise to exclude adults from your targets groups ? It also remains unclear how concerning children with their environment should be brought about, as one needs at least some environmentally concerned adults to do so. A quite different position is the one of those who want to influence today's decision-makers, because of the fact that they are the people who at this very moment make decisions that influence the environment.

Choosing the most important target group might not be so very easy. There are a lot of different levels of environmental knowledge and concern. The various target groups resulting from these different levels might be really equally important.

Possibly we will never agree on the priority target groups. It is important, however, that we should not all address the same target groups. Research in the U.K. indicated for instance that in schools most environmental education took place in junior schools, but that most materials were produced for use in secondary schools.

Furthermore, when developing educational programmes, we should make it very clear for ourselves which target group is going to be addressed by this programme. Programmes should be tailored to that particular group.

In this respect a kind of warning is needed. We have to be careful about how much importance we attach to our own classifications. As our classifications are artificial things we must not let them take control of us. The object of the World Conservation Strategy is to change people's behaviour. Now, think for one moment about how people's behaviour develops and how many different influences there are on behaviour. Some of them we would call education and quite a lot of them we would not. So, if we pretend that we can alter people's behaviour by aiming at particular groups in particular ways, we may be in danger.

From time to time we have to stand back and look at the wider picture without assuming that the categories are as important as we sometimes make them. Such classifications are means to help us and not real things. We also need to know more about what type of behaviour is important to people - and why - because if we have more insight into what their behaviour means to people, i.e. why they act like they do, we also might have more impact on that behaviour.

From this call for reflection we move on to the next category of questions, the questions related to the CONTENTS of ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

5.3. QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE CONTENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

A problem with respect to this topic is that it is possible to make a very long list of subjects that could be taught in environmental education, as well as a almost equally long list of subjects that would deserve more attention in environmental education. The first list might be almost endless.

It may be necessary to define some basic environmental knowledge, that is knowledge which is necessary to appreciate and understand some of the most important issues in environmental protection. More insight into which environmental knowledge is basic knowledge would be of great help. It could be used as a guideline for choosing subjects and activities. An alternative way of looking at it would be identifying key concepts in environmental education, such as the one that humans are part of the environment, that all things are interdependent or the finiteness of resources. Some work has been done on this in the past (2), but much still remains to be done.

However, a framework as a guideline on what to teach as basic environmental knowledge may have a negative side too. A drawback could be that it can be used by educationalists as an alternative to having to think themselves. Proper use of such an expedient would also include a critical attitude towards it. It might be a useful tool in the hands of the people who are designing and constructing environmental education programmes, but less suitable for the practitioner, who might misunderstand it.

The tentative conclusion on this part of the discussion is that a general review of important or indispensable subjects in environmental education still needs to be developed, especially for use by people who design curricula.

This brings the discussion to the third and last category of questions, those concerning HOW WE CAN HELP EACH OTHER MORE EFFECTIVELY IN THE FUTURE.

5.4. HOW CAN WE HELP EACH OTHER MORE EFFECTIVELY IN THE FUTURE AND ALSO OPERATE MORE SUCCESSFULLY ?

This is primarily a question on how the North West Europe Committee (NWEC) works and as quite a lot of non-members are present, it is worth explaining. Professor John Smyth gives an explanation of this subject.

NWEC, then, is a subcommittee of the IUCN Commission on Education, although it enjoyed a very healthy life during the period the Commission did not exist. In fact it has reached its 25th anniversary.

One task of NWEC is to act as a regional subcommittee for the Commission, whose tasks include the channeling up of the ideas

and understanding of its particular region to the Commission.

On the other hand, some of the Commission-programmes and Commission-projects can be tailored to the special conditions of a particular area via a regional subcommittee. So in a sense it is a communication system between the Commission on one side and a particular group of countries on the other.

In practice it is even more than that, because NWEC also has a life of its own. It carries out its own projects, particularly projects that are of common concern to the North West European countries, like the acid rain project and this conference.

Of course NWEC operates under certain constraints. Its members have a background in non-governmental organizations as well as in governmental organizations. The members have various sources of funding, but the Committee itself has no fund nor permanent staff that can undertake things. It depends on the charity of its members and their organizations. Only very occasionally it has obtained funds in recent years in order to carry out a particular programme.

One of its greatest merits has always been that it presents a forum for people to meet, talk, discuss and exchange ideas and experiences. It is the informal rather than the formal part of its activities that have been most valuable.

Although one should not have any overambitious ideas about what the Committee can do, the Committee is always anxious to know what it can do best to help its constituted members.

The IUCN Commission on Education has just been reformed. It has a strategy programme but the details are still to be filled in. We still are anxious to respond to those ideas that particularly concern North Western Europe.

It might be interesting to know how the participants in this conference feel about NWEC, and in particular the Dutch and Belgian colleagues who over these last few days have shown us so many of the interesting things that they are doing. We could be helpful to you.

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The new IUCN Programme Area VI (Education) appears to be rather unknown to the conference participants. People have read about it because it is mentioned in the papers prepared for the conference, but have not been informed of it in any other way. The question is raised how national environmental education organizations can communicate the goals and ideas of this Programme Area to the volunteers and professionals in the field, when they are unaware of its existence. In this respect it is important to note that environmental education organizations like the IVN (Dutch) and the CVN (Belgian) are no IUCN-members.

Another question refers to the possibility of becoming informed of and keeping track of interesting EE-activities elsewhere,

especially in neighbouring countries. NWEC has, as has been mentioned, no resources and is therefore unable to issue a newsletter. However, in the next few days one of the working parties of the Commission on Education will be considering the subject of gathering and distributing information. Perhaps the Commission will start issuing a newsletter, as it has been doing in the past.

A data base with a lot of information on past and present EE-activities would also be an interesting option for closing the information gap. One problem with data bases, however, is that no more information can be extracted from a data base than has been put into it. Furthermore it is unclear what kind of information is needed or how often such a data base would be used. A modest beginning would reduce the risks. Linking of national data bases on environmental education might be a good idea.

Working together in the future and NWEC's role in this respect remains a two-way affair. You bring something in and you get something out. That is the only way it works. Just like training before money came into the business. And the more individuals and organizations contribute to NWEC, the more they can get out of it. If everybody involved gives relevant information to others it works and if everybody waits for the others to disseminate information it will not work. NWEC is a kind of informal network in which ideas, information and materials can be exchanged. Conferences are appropriate occasions for doing this. In the future we could focus on conferences as one of the main manifestations of the Committee. The informal way of working is a very strong point, an asset in itself.

NOTES
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1) P. Jackson, "The Upper School (13-18 Years)", in: Sean McB Carson, (Ed.) "ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION. PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE", London, 1978, page 219

2) Hans Goudswaard and T.M. Szczesny, "DISCUSSION PAPER ON OPTIMUM KNOWLEDGE IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION EDUCATION AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS.", IUCN Commission on Education, date unknown.

Council of Europe, Recommendation nr.14, 1974.

Chapter VI

RETROSPECTION AND PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ACTION

(May 1987)

It is now two years ago that the conference on "environmental education through local groups" took place. For retrospection the original aim should be used as a frame of reference. As stated in the introduction the aim was to demonstrate how issues like those raised by the World Conservation Strategy can be presented to the general public through local associations.

This aim has several different aspects and it is wise to have a close look at them before giving a opinion on whether the aim has been achieved - and to what extent - or not.

First of all there is the question whether local groups can reach the general public, of course at local level. Although not much research has been done into this subject, there is enough evidence - based on experiences in Belgium and in the Netherlands - to support this thesis.

The next logical step is to suppose that a rather large number of local environmental education groups can reach the general public all over the country, especially when the local EE groups are well distributed. In order to do so local groups should work closely together in a kind of network and should be trying to bring roughly the same messages across, mostly using the same methods. Figures of the annual IVN-census support this, showing that hundreds of thousands of people are reached each year. (1) Because new ideas with reference to methods and messages originate from various sources in the network, it can be regarded as a decentralized diffusion system. This kind of diffusion systems recently has been recognized in diffusion theory as a genuine alternative to the classical centralized diffusion systems. (2)

But how strong is such a diffusion system consisting of local groups, cooperating in a network ?. This rather important question can be looked at with regard to capacity (e.g. number of topics to be presented to the general public or number op participants reached in activities) and with regard to sustainability (e.g. are networks of local groups able to sustain themselves, that is able to find the manpower and financial means in order to work in the field of environmental education during many years ?).

Along this line of thought many more questions can be asked. For instance are these local groups really working close together in a network ? How closely knitted is this network ? Are the local groups indeed trying to bring one and the same message across and what are the contents of this message ? What

are they aiming at with their environmental education ? To what extent is a coherent set of methods being used ?

It is clear that at the conference not all the possible questions connected with local enivironmental education groups have been studied in depth. The papers prepared for the conference are based on the assumption that local groups can reach the general public, explain this idea and then concentrate on clarifying how this can be done as effectively as possible. A sufficient level of organization, then, fundraising and especially the recruitment and training of new volunteers are important themes. When the strategy working through local organizations has been opted for (schools as well as voluntary associations) it is at local level that environmental education mainly takes place. Supporting local EE groups and helping to develop teaching materials and training courses are activities that should be done at regional and national level.

The subjects of the conference papers are also the main points studied and discussed during the conference. And the reactions of the participants show, that with regard to this the conference has been a success. THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS, PARTICIPATING IN REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NETWORKS AND SUPPORTED BY THOSE NETWORKS have been clarified in rather much detail to the participants.

In a model of behavioural change by communication, which is often used in the Netherlands, people are thought to go through six stages: awareness, comprehension, attitude, intention, behavioural change and behavioural preservation. (3)

At first one tries to make people aware of possible behaviour. In relation to the main theme of the conference this means making the participants aware of the fact that there are local EE groups and that these groups are successfully organizing EE activities.

In the second stage one aims at comprehension. This means giving the participants enough information about EE through local groups, so that they can explain the peculiarities of this system.

In this model the attitude of a person is regarded as a judgement on all advantages and disadvantages of the recommended behaviour. Everybody who considers this behaviour has to form his own opinion. Such a cost-benefit analysis with regard to EE through local groups could yield conclusions like 'it takes too much time to train volunteers and anyway the quality of their work is disappointing', or 'there is nothing that can be compared with the influence of enthusiastic volunteers in EE'. This is clearly a personal feeling. Therefore no instructional objective can be formulated that state which attitude pupils should achieve. (4)

The attitude as well as the norms upheld by society influence the intention towards the behaviour someone has in mind. In many

societies individuals are expected to contribute somehow to social life and charity, often on a voluntary basis. This is an important norm with regard to voluntary EE associations. Societies, however, differ in this respect and therefore voluntary associations will prosper in one society and fail in another.

Behaviour is a slippery concept in this respect. What kind of behavioural outcome for the participants did the organizing committee have in mind ? As concerns actual doing something one could think of progressive growth of participants - in terms of more knowledge and skills - towards trying to start a local EE-group somewhere near Heeze on the last day of the conference. But would that have been a feasible goal ? It certainly would not have established any lasting local groups.

Given the limited resources available to the organizing committee - in terms of time and possible training situations - behavioural goals were hardly feasible, except goals in the fields of awareness and comprehension. And by presenting examples of local EE group activities the organizing committee could hope that some of the enthusiasm of the local volunteers would inspire the participants in the conference.

With reference to the working of local EE groups many questions may remain unsolved, but not the question of sustainability of this system. Local EE-groups have existed for more than fifty years in the Netherlands and are growing in number and attracting more and more volunteers. Furthermore the number of educational activities and the number of participants in those activities are growing too. So this system of diffusion of environmental knowledge and experience is doubtlessly thriving better than ever.

One more thing that can be learned from this conference is, that almost no real links exist between local environmental groups and the IUCN Programme on Education. The contents of this programme was unknown to the local groups when the conference took place and still is today ! Therefore it cannot be used by local EE groups as a guideline for the planning of activities. This is at least the case in the Netherlands and in Belgium. One explanation of this phenomenon is of course that national environmental education organizations in the said countries are no IUCN-members. On the other hand one can also conclude, that those organizations that are IUCN-members have not paid much attention in their publications to the IUCN Programme on Education.

There is still quite a gap between the idea of thinking globally and acting locally and its realization of it, as long as many national and international organizations pay so little attention to the local level. Local EE groups can bring messages like those included in the World Conservation Strategy across to the general public. The extent to which this is being done is unknown, but it is certainly not stimulated by intensive communication on WCS-issues with such local groups. (5)

The last question to be examined in the retropective part of this chapter has to do with the aims and results of environmental education. The discussions on these subjects show that there is still much need for more clarity. (6) The question regarding the effectiveness of environmental education has of course much to do with the aims or goals chosen. (7) In general there are three categories of goals of environmental education:

- fostering environmental awareness
- stimulating environmentally sound behaviour
- trying to build public, societal and even political support for sound environmental policies.

A goal that fits into this last category has been formulated in Chapter 13 of the World Conservation Strategy as "Building support for conservation: participation and education". In particular in EE-programmes often goals belonging to these three categories are confused, which makes planning as well as evaluating such programmes much more difficult.

There is a relation between categories of goals of environmental education and analyses or interpretations of the causes of environmental problems. In PERSONALISTIC interpretations of environmental problems these problems are considered to result from ideas and attitudes individuals have towards the environment. The causes of environmental deterioration are in our culture, even in its roots. Bringing about the right mentality is a way to solve environmental problems. Individuals are seen as independent creatures acting of their own free will. (8)

Contrary to personalistic interpretation are the so called SOCIETAL-POLITICAL interpretations, of which there are two kinds. The first - a SOCIETAL-AFFIRMATIVE position - is rather positive about our present modern industrial society and sees environmental problems mostly as regrettable by-products of normal and quite justifiable activities. Not so much is wrong and all that is needed are a few new rules and some technical measures. In the second - a SOCIETAL-CRITICAL position - environmental problems are regarded to be the results of as resulting from structural features of modern society. These structural features make an environmentally sound society impossible. Environmental problems are the reflections of conflicts of interests in society. Economic interests - that is: as they are at present interpreted - are opposed to environmental interests. There is an unequal division of societal power that directly or indirectly influences the environment. Some people or groups of people have more influence on decisions that affect the environment than others. Some people or groups of people also receive more benefits from exploiting the environment and others receive a larger share of the noises, pollution and dangers.

Both societal-political interpretations, however, agree to a certain extent on the position of individuals in society. The structural features of society are seen as having a bearing on individual behaviour. Behaviour does not result from decisions by isolated individuals, because people live in all kinds of societal relationships which influence their thought as well as their actions. Whereas in personalistic interpretations people are seen as creating society to an excessive extent, societal-political interpretations tend to attach too much value to the massive structural aspects of society and to the constraints that follow from that structure. The first "fails to take sufficient account of the fact that action is constrained by the situation in which it takes place" and the second - in its extremes - can be accused of "reification of society and the consequent belittling of man". (9) However, man and society are not separated, but interconnected. Therefore, it is "important to emphasize that the relationship between man, the producer, and the social world, his product, is and remains a dialectical one. That is, man (not, of course, in isolation but in his collectivities) and his social world interact with each other. The product acts back upon the producer. Externalization and objectivation are moments in a continuing dialectical process". (10)

A closer look at the three categories of goals for environmental education reveals, that environmental awareness remains a rather vaque concept. Though a subject of discussion for more than a decade it is not new at all, but it has never been operationalized in a satisfying way. The second category of goals is not in a better position. Only in a handful of cases is it possible to establish which behaviour is clearly environmentally sound. Quite often no clear judgement can be made because the questions are ambiguous or too complex. Most often of all no connection at all can be established between individual behaviour and environmental decay. For instance the severe pollution of the river Rhine is not caused by numerous individuals who day after day throw their garbage into it. Both categories of goals tend to reflect the thinking related to personalistic interpretations of environmental problems and consequently have severe inbuilt limitations.

More promising goals for environmental education can be found in the third category. Building support for sound environmental policies and measures is the best conceivable goal, albeit not an easy one. Contrary to the two other categories it implies a clarification of why and how the environmental decline can take place, what mechanisms are involved and what can be done to stop it and to prevent further decay. (11) One cannot expect people to support a cause they do no to a certain extent understand. And the more they understand it, the more they are able to support it.

Therefore it is insufficient to teach participants in educational activities various 'environment-friendly' behaviour, such as conserving energy or sorting their garbage into different components. In itself these activities - and others - can be very useful and this is not meant to belittle them. But

the learning of environmentally sound behaviour - when possible - mainly fulfils the role of exercise. The contents of these activities have insufficient depth to explain the environmental deterioration in its full sense, because it is too much connected with random or rather isolated problems. (12)

In order to win motivated and long-term support it is necessary to explain the societal circumstances as well as the ecological backgrounds of the environmental problems. One cannot do this unless learning situations are created with sufficient depth and continuance. (13) The results of environmental education aimed at building public support will be a strengthening of environmental organizations, in terms of an increased membership as well as more able and more motivated members.

The relation between such results and solutions to environmental problems is an indirect one. Stronger environmental organizations might be able to fight better for sound environmental policies, but one cannot be certain of their success beforehand. This may be a disappointing statement. However, is it fair to expect direct results - in terms of solving environmental problems - from environmental education ? To answer this question one has to look for comparable situations in the field of education. Can, for instance, the teaching of arithmetic in primary schools be related to the mathematical success of computer industries ? There certainly will be a relationship, but one that might be extremely difficult to establish. A better example may be found in safety or traffic education. Stimulating traffic education in schools means first of all that children learn what rules guide safe traffic. This learning result is a direct one, lower accident figures that may follow are indirect ones. The same holds for safety education in industry. However, the relations between traffic education and lower traffic accident figures seem to be less complex than the relations between environmental education and the solving of environmental problems.

On the relations between individual behaviour and environmental problems empirical knowledge is often lacking, (14) which makes it much more difficult to say anything that makes sense on the more complicated relations between education and solutions for problems. Furthermore, there is another reason why it is at this moment hardly possible to correlate success in solution to environmental problems to environmental education. This is the relatively low number of people that participate in environmental education.

The situation being as it is, there is no other way of assessing results of environmental education than by looking at what people learn from it. This can be done by comparing instructional objectives with the knowledge and abilities of learners at the end of a course. By measuring results in this way one remains within the educational context and that could be of some value. When primary school children learn primary school arithmetics in a satisfactory way and achieve the intended level of competence, one may quite legitimately assume that this will be useful in their secondary education and further on. This

assumption is supported by research. In the same way one may assume that if participants in environmental education learn quite a lot about what threatens the environment today and about what can and should be done about it, this will be useful in their further activities in the environmental movement and so on. Working with such an assumption - within the limited educational context - seems more fruitful than the often negative speculations about quite insufficiently understood relations.

.....

The above retrospection has almost become a new discussion paper itself. Of course some new ideas and information collected in the last few years have slipped into it. Yet in a few pages the questions discussed can only be roughly outlined. There is not enough space - and this is also not the right place - to give the necessary arguments and specification of details. Furthermore, the retrospection was meant as a basis for looking at the future and for some proposals for further action. It is time to take that direction.

.....

If there is one achievement in environmental education in the Netherlands in the last few years that is worth mentioning, it is the growing consensus that a core curriculum is needed. This point has already been raised, but gently, at the conference in Heeze, and has been developed further since. A paper on this subject by Mr. K. Boersma has been translated into English and was sent to all NWEC-members in June, 1986. (15)

Such a core curriculum could not only be very useful for the development of environmental education within the formal school system, but also for certain forms of out of school environmental education. The nature-guide courses of the CVN and the IVN could probably use such a core curriculum. A core curriculum could provide a common basis for the development of teaching materials and methods. Furthermore, it would mean that the almost endless number of possible subjects to be taught in environmental education would be somewhat limited. But most of all it would mean a progressive step forward from what can be called a more or less incidental way of developing environmental education to a more systematic way.

Two aspects of a core curriculum are important. First, it has to be a longitudinal curriculum, which means that what will be taught at a certain level will be based on what has been learned at an earlier level. Second, that is has to be a multi-disciplinarian one. At present important topics for environmental education are taught in the context of several school subjects, such as biology, geography, physics, chemistry, history and social science. Often there is a lack of cohesion between what is taught in the various school subjects. A goal of the core curriculum to be developed is to improve cohesion, so that when for instance a subject like acid rain is discussed in class various teachers will help to clarify this topic, each

from his or her own special background.

A further question to be answered is the question regarding the topics which should be taught in environmental education. As mentioned before, the number of possibilities is almost endless. But which topics are really necessary, acid rain for instance, or genetical erosion ? This is first of all a question of operationalization of the goals chosen. A possible approach is to analyse the World Conservation Strategy very carefully and to write down what 'academic' knowledge is necessary to understand it. An analysis of Chapter 13 "Building support for conservation: participation and education" would for instance give such academic topics as the societal consequences of investment in education and the benefits of public participation in decision-making.

With the aim "understanding the WCS and being able to explain its main goals" for the final level of secondary education as a starting point, one could try to find out what should be learned at the lower levels of secondary and primary education to achieve at said aim at the right moment. This method of developing a core curriculum is not a simple one. Not only does it require a lot of work and a lot of time, but it is also a very specialized activity. The people involved in such a project should be experienced teachers and preferably curriculum designers with a good knowledge of environmental education, who are willing to see further than their own special fields. No need to say that such people are rare.

Clearly the development of this core curriculum will take some time. Some money is needed too, because this cannot be done in a couple of spare hours. The specialists needed will have to be paid. So there are still a few obstacles, but hopefully those will be overcome and then in a few years we might be able to present a proposal for a core curriculum for environmental education. This might be an interesting subject for the North West Europe Committee. Therefore the first proposal for future action is to hold a conference on this subject as soon as it is feasible. But that is not all. It is clear that people developing such a core curriculum could be assisted by all kinds of information on relevant research done elsewhere. Materials like those developed by the Strathclyde Environmental Education Group in Scotland are a good example. (16) It could therefore be useful to establish a working group on the development of core curricula - there have to be several, tailored to the educational systems of various countries - for environmental education. This working group could concentrate on the exchange of materials and ideas and could for instance comment on drafts.

To concentrate on what the most useful content of environmental education might be is a logical next step after the Heeze conference. This conference demonstrated how the general public can be reached via networks of closely cooperating local groups. As has been shown, these are - in a certain way - means to communicate with the general public. Another and well-known line of communication is via the school system. If we clarify our

message - in terms of aims and contents - it would help to raise the quality of environmental education via both lines of communication. A core curriculum is the best means for doing so.

D.A. Huitzing, May 15th, 1987

NOTES

1) "VERSLAG OVER HET WERK IN DE AFDELINGEN IN 1985" (Report on the activities of the local affiliates; IVN 1985 census), IVN, Amsterdam, June 1986, p. 18-30. (In Dutch)

2) Centralized diffusion systems are much more dominated by professionals than decentralized diffusion systems are. More advantages and disadvantages of decentralized diffusion are discussed in the third and latest edition of the 'classic' handbook on this subject.

E.M. Rogers, "DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS", The Free Press, New York, 1983 (Third edition), page 333-338

3) G.J. Kok & S. Siero, "TIN RECYCLING: AWARENESS, COMPREHENSION, ATTITUDE, INTENTION AND BEHAVIOR", Journal of Economic Psychology, 1985

4) K. Th. Boersma, "The Educational Side of Environmental Education. On the Educational, Methodological and Pedagogical Points of Reference for Environmental Education", in: "NEW IDEAS IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION", Croom Helm, 1987, ISBN 0-7099-5042-X (in print)

5) There is a fair amount of communication on general EE-subjects between for instance the IVN national organization and local IVN-affiliates. Although WCS-issues are discussed, they are not the main topic.

6) Environmental education is still very much message-oriented.

Many questions in the final discussion session are message-related questions (e.g. questions nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 and 11), whereas the conference itself was focused mainly on methodological and organizational topics.

See also Chapter 2 remark 1, which mentions that in the development of environmental education strategic, methodological and organizational questions often receive insufficient attention.

Often a very special emphasis is placed on the contents of the message. Sometimes there is only one correct interpretation of the message.

However, modern communication research reveals that there is much more in communication - and therefore in education - than only the message. Messages do not sell themselves, or, in other words: a good message is not enough. There is a growing conviction that the results of communication processes depend to a very large extent on the needs of the 'receivers'. Therefore more attention should be paid to ways in which people conceptualize their world. Messages based on concepts of 'senders' alone are inadequate. The

'sender-receiver' model is being replaced by a model in which transaction, interaction, convergence and networks are important concepts.

In extension science, a branch of communication science, this development is clearly visible. In a recent review N. Röling distinguishes three stages:

At first the emphasis is on the CONTENT OF CHANGE. The prevailing question is "How do I get them where I want them ?"

"The question arises from the basic situation of a prospective 'change agent' who has knowledge he or she considers essential for the benefit of mankind or some sub-set thereof. The basic problem then becomes to 'transfer' this knowledge through some form of communication. 'If they only knew what was good for them!'"

"Extension (communication intended to help; remark DH) is seen as a simple tool of intervention, like a dart gun, which shoots knowledge and motiviation darts into 'target' clients, thus 'transferring' knowledge."
(Röling, 1985, p. 272)

In the second stage the emphasis is on RESISTANCE TO CHANGE. The leading question then is 'why don't they do what I want them to do ?'.

"...in other words, why do people resist change although the change agent is sure they would benefit from what is offered ?" The answer focuses on adaptation, but in two different respects:

a) adaptation of the target person, group or category to the extension message, or
b) adaptation of the extension message or method to the target clients."

"The difference between these two answers is fundamental." When using answer a) "the correctness of the extension message is unquestioned". One could think, that "if sending that message to people is not effective in changing their voluntary behaviour, it is the people who must be at fault".

On the other hand, when working with answer b), "the focus is on adapting the extension method and/or the knowledge input to suit the needs of the designated target clients, group or category. In situations where extension is in close contact with a sophisticated agricultural commmunity, the need to listen and understand, to pretest new ideas with local people before promoting them and to use knowledge which has been developed by farmers themselves, is so obvious, that part of the answer to 'Why don't they ?" presents itself readily, that is, extension should be a two-way process, it should use two-way communication.

Extension should be both top-down and bottom-up at the same time." (Röling, 1985, p. 273)

The emphasis on communication as A TWO-WAY PROCESS is characteristic of the third stage.

N. Röling, "Extension science: increasingly preoccupied with knowledge systems", in: "SOCIOLOGIA RURALIS", 1985, Vol. XXV, 3/4, p. 269-290.

7) A discussion of aims or goals is hardly possible without distinguishing various possible levels of goals. A helpful classification is the following:

		for instance:
A. level of norms and values	: ideals	'freedom'
B. level of general aims	: objectives	'just laws'
C. level of operational aims	: goals	'polluter pays' principle
D. instrumental level	: means	enforcement of laws

In this classification the various levels are important, not the labels. One could very well give other labels to the four levels. For instance in educational science the concept 'instructional objective' is often used. Instructional objectives, however, are mostly 'goals' (intermediate goals or means) at instrumental level, sometimes 'goals' at operational level.

Level A is the level of ideals that can never be completely attained ('worldpeace'), yet realization of such an ideal should be sought, because it represents an important human value.

In principle it is possible to realize the objectives of level B. However, it is very difficult to predict the period of time needed for doing so. An example in Western-European history is the general right to vote in elections. At present this is still an - let us hope its realization is not too far away - objective of democratic forces in many countries in the developing world. A level B-aim can be of use in long-term planning.

One can realize the goals of level C within a reasonably short time, for instance within a few years or even shorter. These are the goals used in medium and short-term planning.

Level D is the level of often rather concrete means.

Instructional objectives such as the ones used in planning nature guide courses are level C goals. Goals for environmental education programmes in the formal school system should also be classified as level C goals.

Discussions of the goals of environmental education, however, tend to concentrate on level B objectives or even on the ideals of level A.

When working on level C goals, one should of course try to be reasonably certain that the efforts contribute to attaining in due time the corresponding level B objectives. More is rarely possible.

8) J.B. Koole, "Mondiale vorming en het thema milieu" (Global education and the theme 'environment'), in: H. Gerritsma (ed.), "DE SCHOOL IN DE WERELD, DE WERELD OP SCHOOL" (The school in the world, the world at school), Amersfoort, 1984, page 137-139. (In Dutch)

Also in: D.A. Huitzing "MILIEUBEDERF: ANALYSE, ACTIE EN EDUCATIE", (Environmental decay: analysis, action and education"), unpublished paper, 1987. (In Dutch)

9) D. Blackledge & B. Hunt, "SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF EDUCATION", Croom Helm, London, 1985, p. 316-318.

The process according to which concepts used by people in their minds take on the character of concrete existing realities is called 'reification'.

10) P.L. Berger & Th. Luckmann, "THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY. A TREATISE IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE", Anchor Books, New York, 1967, page 60.

11) The fact that there are environmental problems is one of a handful of possible arguments for environmental education. In this retrospection it is used in an instrumental sense, that is environmental education is seen as INSTRUMENTAL in solving environmental problems. Other motives for environmental education - and of no less value than the one mentioned - are PEDAGOCIC motives (for instance children are active discoverers of the world around them and EE provides opportunities for them to do so; caring for animals and plants is a valuable element in a child's development; children grow up in a polluted and ecologically impovered world and EE helps them to prepare for living - now and later as adults - under these circumstances), DIDACTIC motives (for instance learning from nature and learning about current topics can enhance the quality of education), CULTURAL motives (for instance the conservation of nature has a cultural value in itself; man's knowledge of nature has been acquired during many centuries, it is worthwhile to pass this knowledge on to future generations; nature inspires people's imagination

and is therefore a source for artistic expressions), PARTICIPATIONAL motives (for instance EE is necessary to give people the insights needed about issues important to them, so that they can influence such issues) and a RECREATIONAL motive (EE helps people to enjoy the world around them).

12) Furthermore the kind of activities chosen in EE to incite environmentally sound behaviour are often not very suitable to stimulate further learning.

13) It is possible to identify two important stages in EE. The first step aims to arouse interest and to make people enthusiastic about learning about nature and about the environment. The second step is more directed to deepening interest and knowledge. In this phase it is - given enough time and a well prepared programme - possible to give people a real understanding of and insight in the societal and ecological backgrounds of environmental decay.

In Chapter III (page 20) the above-mentioned stages have been identified as "interest-arousing activities" and "environmental education proper".

14) Research illuminating the societal roots of environmantal deterioration is notably rare. See P. Leroy, "HERRIE OM DE HEIMAT", Antwerp, 1983, page 92-93 (dissertation on environmental sociology; in Dutch).

15) See the paper by K. Th. Boersma, mentioned in remark No. 4. See also Chapter 5, point 5.3. Mr. Boersma's paper deals to a certain extent with guidelines that can be followed in order to choose contents for environmental education.

16) Scottish Curriculum Development Service in association with the Strathclyde Environmental Education Group, "ENVIRONMENT: A LEARNING EXPERIENCE", 1985, (three volumes).

APPENDIX 1

PAPERS PREPARED FOR THE CONFERENCE

(See page 2-4 for the subjects covered by the following papers.)

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC, Commission on Education, IUCN).

HEEZE, the Netherlands, May 13th-May 16th, 1985,

Paper No. 1. Introduction: On the role of voluntary associations in environmental education and their relation to the IUCN Programme on Education.*)

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1. Introduction

As has been stated in the invitation, people used to think that the environmentalists' message could reach the general public via the mass media. This, however, appears not to be the case, at least not enough. The idea developed in this paper - and later on in the course of this conference - is that the general public should also be reached via local environmental groups. Indeed, both strategies supplement each other. The aim of the conference, therefore, is to demonstrate how issues like those raised by the World Conservation Strategy can be presented to the general public via local selforganizing associations which bring in and train their members themselves to organize educational activities for the public.
In order to do so local environmental education (EE) groups have to comply with a number of conditions. One condition is that there should be enough local EE-groups, because just a few scattered ones cannot do the job. Furthermore it is necessary that local EE-groups should co-operate in some kind of regional or even national network. Other necessary conditions that cannot be explained here will receive attention in the following papers.

This paper is an introduction to the topics to be discussed.
It starts with an opinion on environmental education, which is, of course, related to the ideas presented about voluntary involvement in EE. In addition to this, a concise picture of voluntary EE

*) A paper based on the situation in the Netherlands

associations is given. The arguments mentioned, as well as the other issues raised, will get attention in detail in the papers 2 and 4. An introduction to training courses for nature guides is the next item of the programme. Some historical roots of these courses are mentioned, but present-day nature guide courses will receive full attention in paper no. 5. How local EE-activities are being supported is also discussed, although not in much detail. This topic will be the subject of both paper no. 6 (about support given from regional level) and paper no. 7 (about supporting local groups from the national level, which is quite a different role). In the last part of this paper the relations between local EE-activities and IUCN Programme Area VI are being explored. No final statement on this is given, but an opinion for further discussion. Finally, a brief survey of EE in the Netherlands is given in an appendix.

2. Environmental education

Environmental education is the organization of learning opportunities in which people can learn about nature conservation and about the environment.*)
It is a pedagogical translation of problems that society has to face. In order to be able to organize such learning opportunities, local voluntary associations must not only have knowledge about the (local) environmental but also about how to organize educational activities. In other words, they need educational knowledge as well as skills.

*) A more embracing description is that environmental education includes all activities aimed at
- fostering knowledge about nature conservation and environmental protection
- stimulating awareness with regard to the issues mentioned
- helping participants to discover their responsibilities in relation to these issues
- helping participants to discover their possibilities to contribute to solutions to these problems.

On the other hand this does not imply that the four aspects mentioned above should be included in every EE-activity. This depends much on for instance subject and target group.

In this respect it is important to note the concept of "environmental education" covers a rather wide range of activities. Environmental education can take place in formal school programmes, in various kinds of adult educational activities and in programmes of youth organizations.
These three mainstreams of environmental education require a more or less specialized approach, depending on the age of the participants, the kind of formal programme and the subject to be taught. Very specialized educational activities may prove to be too much a strain on voluntary organizations.

Members of local environmental education groups are for instance seldom able to fulfil the role of teacher-trainer. Yet they can be a great help to schools, by organizing or helping to organize various activities, such as nature trails, excursions, field studies, demonstrations and lectures.

In addition to working for and with schools, local environmental education organizations can provide help to youth organizations, e.q. by organizing special outdoor activities. A number of local EE-associations in the Netherlands even have a youth-group within their organization.

However, the most promising category for local EE-groups to focus on is the public at large.
Before dwelling somewhat longer on this subject it is necessary to realize that educational activities are useless when motivation to learn is lacking. Although there will always be people who are willing to participate in EE-courses or evening classes, their number will probably be rather small. Something has to be done, therefore, to motivate people to engage in environmental education activities. It is necessary to develop interest in nature conservation as well as in environmental problems, for instance by providing opportunities for starting to appreciate nature. For this one should keep as close as possible to the world of daily life of potential participants. Suitable activities for this purpose, called 'interestarousing activities', are for instance nature walks, exhibitions, television programmes etcetera.

Environmental problems, however, are among the most oppressive problems of modern society. Most environmental issues are too complicated to be explained fully in slide-shows, television programmes, or exhibitions in visitors'-centres, no matter how well-presented or well documented they are.
It simply takes more time to present the whole picture of why species become extinct, why rain has become acid or why tropical forests are disappearing. And, what is even more important, it takes more time to digest such information. There is, therefore, a case for EE-activities such as courses which last long enough to study conservation and protection in depth. So a distinction has been made between 'interestarousing activities' aimed at enlarging the number of potential EE-participants and 'environmental education proper', aimed at providing a deeper and broader insight in ecology, man and the environment. Some general rules for distinguishing educational activities proper are:

- the activities are aimed at achieving instructional objectives;
- the activities are designed didactically and logically to promote the achievement of said objectives;
- teaching and learning develops in a process during a certain time;
- there is a fixed group of participants;
- a kind of performance assessment takes place at the end of a series of activities.*)

3. The role of voluntary associations

Voluntary environmental groups can play a useful role in environmental education (EE). Most voluntary environmental associations in the Netherlands are either local groups or local branches of nation-wide organizations. They organize all kinds of educational activities, such as exhibitions, excursions, discussions and shorter or longer courses.

*) Based on the Commission on Promoting Adult Education Networks (Commissie Bevordering Educatieve Netwerken, 5e Advies), 1979.

There are least several reasons why participation of voluntary groups in environmental education is so vital:

1. Local associations are able to mobilize the knowledge and work potential of quite a number of people, who often belong to the local community.
   Moreover, the knowledge mobilized is knowledge of the local environment. This kind of knowledge may be more scarce in nationwide organizations. Local groups also have access to all kinds of local resources, such as facilities and finances.
2. For most people, contributing to environmental education activities is one of the few possibilities for doing something about the deterioration of the environment*). It is necessary to create such opportunities, to make environmental concern more than just an empty phrase. People who feel concerned about the quality of the environment also need ways to express their feelings.
3. Education requires a reliable source of information. Even the words of environmental education organizations should not to be taken for granted.
   They have to provide information which can be checked. It is clear that independent organizations are more likely to be viewed as reliable sources of information than others.
   Sometimes even government agency are distrusted because governments are somehow involved in polluting the environment, by issuing licenses to polluting industries, by developing new industrial activities or by owning state industries.
4. Local groups with their own educational activities and in their local situation can reach a large number of people more easily than nationwide organizations.

*) The other possibilities are participation in political or social action aimed at conservation or protection of the environment and/or changing one's lifestyle and consumer behaviour.

4. Programme and membership

Local EE-groups need a balanced activities-programme, with sufficient interest arousing activities to motivate people to participate in one or more of such EE-courses. Of course there can be various kinds of courses, on various subjects and differing in duration and depth. Activities to arouse interest, apart from those already mentioned, are excursions, articles in local newspapers, films, short courses and slideshows.

A local EE-group needs above all a number of enthusiastic volunteers to make it succesful. Although enthusiasm is not enough, it is of vital importance and indispensable to overcome the unavoidable setbacks. It is necessary to believe in education. Working in this field requires some optimism as well as concern for or a feeling of relatedness with nature.
As has been said before, a local EE-association needs knowledge about the (local) environment as well as educational knowledge and skills.
Ideas, knowledge, skills and enthusiasm should be translated into a programme of activities. This requires some minimum level of organization, because there are tasks to be divided and responsibilities to be taken care of.

5. Preaching to the converted

Of course it is impossible to keep everybody motivated and active. What counts, however, is to have the highest possible number of active members.
Yet unless something is done about it, there will always be a steady decline in membership. People may be move to another town or village, find another and more demanding job, get married or may have some other prefectly acceptable reason for leaving the local EE-association. Therefore it is always necessary to search for new members, and what is more: it is necessary to train them.

The much-despised "Preaching to the converted" is therefore not despicable at all. It is a useful strategy to find new, active members among people already interested in nature and nature

conservation. But this should not remain the only target group for educational activities. It is necessary to educate (or train) those already motivated and to motivate others.
To find potential participants for EE-activities the local EE group should develop an advertising and publicity strategy. This could be the job of a specialized working group.

6. Nature-guide courses

For more than twenty years nature guide courses have been the core of the educational programme and a succesful way for local EE-groups to train their new members. Moreover, these courses attract a number of participants who are not members of the local EE-association at all. Some of these non-member participants follow such a nature guide course because they can use what they learn in their job. Especially schoolteachers and foresters follow nature guide courses for this reason.

Since the first nature guide courses in the early Sixties, content and programmes have been developed further. The early nature guide courses were designed to be held between September and May. The aim of these courses was to give experienced but mostly non-professional naturalists enough training in didactics and oratory, so that at the end of the nature guide training course they could organize nature walks in which the landscape, its development and its flora an fauna were to be explained to the general public. A further aim was to improve the ecological knowledge of the participants.
However, experience soon showed that quite a lot of the participants were not experienced naturalists but just enthusiastic non-professionals who wanted to become experienced naturalists. Therefore much more time had to be devoted to learning about nature, nature conservation and ecology. Three quarters of a year proved to be too short. So the programme grew and the courses became longer. Some lasted nearly two years. Nowadays most nature guide courses take about 15 months, so that field work is possible in all seasons.

The early nature guide courses were primarily intented as a kind of in-service training for members of local naturalists associations. However, non-members appeared to be most interested in participating in these courses and soon many courses had more non-members than members. By organizing these nature guide courses the local associations were able to enlist quite a number of new members, an unexpected but very interesting development. Furthermore, by organizing such courses local naturalists' associations became more and more interested in education and often they developed a specialized educational branch or became EE-groups themselves. So nature guide courses help in four ways to strengthen the ecological movement by:

a. attracting new members for local groups
b. training members of local groups
c. providing local groups with an experienced cadre able to organize nature walks and all sorts of other activities
d. developing new ways and methods for environmental education.

7. Other educational activities of local EE-groups

Of course more kinds of courses have been developed by various EE-organizations, such as a special course for schoolguides, a training course for those who are to train nature guides and an environment and housekeeping-course. Another course about nature in and near urban surroundings, is intended for people who are just interested but not yet planning to become an active member of a local group. Such rather simple courses are often called "green" courses.

8. Financing local EE-activities

Of course it is impossible to organize a lot of EE-activities without money. This may present new local EE-groups with a real problem, because the local authorities will want to see some succesful activities first and it is unadvisable to ask too high fees for participation in activities.

In the Netherlands it is more or less customary not to ask any financial compensation for participating in interestarousing

activities - except when large groups ask for organized nature walks - but to let participants in EE-courses pay a certain part of the costs involved. In the long term some money from the local (educational) authorities is necessary. A local EE-group which organizes a lot of activities will also need a place to work, especially a place where courses can be given. Such a place could be provided by the municipality, as EE is not merely a naturalists' hobby, but an indispendable part of every conservation and environmental protection strategy. There is, therefore, a case for municipalities having an EE-policy of their own.

9. Supporting local EE-groups in the Netherlands

Nowadays local EE-groups in the Netherlands, as well as schools and other educational organizations are supported by regional EE-consultants.*) The tasks of these consultants are to advise about EE-activities and to help to train officials and cadre members of EE-organizations. They are paid with grants from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, as well as from the provinces where they work.

The support of these regional EE-consultants enables a further development of local EE-activities.

In turn, regional EE-consultants receive support from national EE-organizations, such as the IVN (Institute for Environmental Education), especially its national bureau, and the LSNME (National Advisory Centre for Environmental Education). Besides advising and training regional EE-consultants, the tasks of national EE-organizations comprise developing new activities and methods, training of EE-professionals and volunteers, supplying documentation and contributing to research-planning. The aforementioned national EE-organizations are financed from grants from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and from the Ministry of Environmental Protection, as well as by membership fees.

*) In addition to the ten regional EE-consultants paid with grants from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and from the provinces there are also educational officers at the regional level paid with grants from the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Supporting and developing EE-activities at the national level prevents too much a diverging in regional developments, as well as unnecessary re-inventing of what has already been invented elsewhere. At the national level, educational developments or problems can also be viewed in a much wider scope than at the local or regional level.

10. Local EE-activities and IUCN Programme Area VI *)

Reading about how local EE-groups can reach the general public may evoke the question how the activities of these groups related to the IUCN-programme. When asking this question one of course has to realize that the present IUCN educational programme is a quite recent affair.
It has been accepted by the IUCN General Assembly in November 1984.
Disseminating ideas from the international level to the national and local level takes a lot of time. At the moment most local groups are not quite aware of the contents of the new IUCN educational programme. Comparing the activities of local EE-groups with Programme Area VI has to be done with the existence of this time-lag in mind.

Programme Area VI is addressed to four basic audiences
- Environmental educators in general (goal 1)
- Professionals in related fields (through training) (goal 2)
- Decision makers (goal 3)
- The general public (goal 4).

The four goals mentioned are:
1. To enchange the quality and effectiveness of environmental education worldwide
2. To promote the improved management of natural resources on a sustainable basis through enchanced training opportunities

* Programme Area VI: "Enhancing training, education, and public awareness in relation to major conservation issues".

3. To widen the acceptance of the principles and concepts of the World Conservation Strategy by decision-makers in government, public and private sectors
4. To improve the understanding, attitudes and actions of individuals and local groups towards their environment.

Looking more closely at the educational activities of local groups in Belgium and in the Netherlands will reveal, that these groups already try to inform the general public about environmental problems and about the need for protection and management. Local EE-groups, collaborating in networks covering larger areas, can be the intermediates through whom IUCN can reach the general public. This is a statement worth further examining in the coming conference.

A closer look at the afore-mentioned goals will reveal that these goals are related to each other. The interrelatedness between goal 3 and goal 4 is very strong indeed, whereas there is also a relation with goal 1. Goal 2 is the only one that can be pursued to some degree independently from the other ones.
Informing the local public will make them more aware of environmental problems and will stimulate the public or groups within it to exert pressure on policy-makers and decision-makers.
Decision-makers, expecially political decision-makers, cannot depart too much from what their organizations or voters will accept. This means that decision-makers should not be isolated from the institutions or groups in society to which they belong.

On the other hand it is clear that the public will become more and better informed if the quality and effectiveness of EE-programmes is dramatically improved. Therefore goal 1 is perhaps the key to this web of interrelated goals, that is, the key to improving and developing environmental education and environmental protection. More, new and better EE-activities create a wider acceptance of the environmentalists' goals and persuade more and more people to contribute towards those goals. Somehow these activities strengthen the environmental organizations, which in turn become are able to develop more educational and other activities. Given enough time it works like an oil-spill and its influence will be felt every-

where. "Thinking globally and acting locally" is a fitting slogan for this, although its meaning is easily confused. Helping to preserve the local environment as such indeed contributes to this idea, because if this happens everywhere a wealth of species, as well as important ecological processes and ecosystems is more likely to be preserved. Many local contributions together will, on the long run, be felt at the global level.

IUCN, therefore, could stimulate this process by helping to develop EE-organizations at the national level in various countries, whereas such EE-organizations could be urged to develop a network of local EE-groups or agencies. This is of course no remedy for all ailments, not in the least because there are many necessary conditions to be fulfilled. Yet it is worth trying, because it is rather difficult to imagine solutions to environmental problems without more and deeper public knowledge and awareness of these problems.

D.A. Huitzing, March 1985,

Remarks on an earlier draft of this paper made by J. van den Nieuwenhof, R.E. de Vringer, K. Schilder, ir. J.M. Klaaijsen and ir. Chr. Maas Geesteranus greatly improved the original text.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. Local EE-groups fulfil a useful role in informing and educating the general public, as well as in training members of environmental organizations.
2. In order to inform the general public in different parts of the country, a network of local EE-groups is necessary.
3. By stimulating local EE-groups, the number of EE-activities as well as the quality of these activities can be raised.
4. A regional or national environmental organization can fulfil the task of helping local EE-groups to get started.
5. Local EE-groups can also be helped with training materials, training facilities, special courses for executives, teachers and cadres and with some money to reimburse costs of activities.
6. There is a case for a local EE-policy, focused on helping local EE-organization to fulfil their educational role. Designing such a policy is a task for local authorities.
7. National governments can stimulate local authorities to design and implement such a policy. They can also provide regional EE-organizations with the financial means necessary for supporting local EE-groups. So there is a case for a national EE-policy too.
8. In accordance to Goal 1 of Programme Area VI IUCN could help to develop national and/or regional educational organizations which in their turn will develop environmental education programmes, based on networks of local organizations.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN.

HEEZE, The Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985

Paper no. 2A "THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME OF LOCAL GROUPS, AIMED AT THE GENERAL PUBLIC" *

Introduction

Environmental education is often very much an activity of grassroots organizations. People worry about environmental deterioration and want to do something about it, especially about what they observe in the village or area in which they live. When they meet others who are likewise concerned, they may start something up together. This may be the beginning of a local environmental education (EE) group. On the other hand, the incentive to start a local EE group may originate from activities of national or regional environmental organizations. Sometimes a small but enthusiastic group of volunteers who have done some course in a neighbouring village start their own local group in their own place of residence.

The background of the members of such a local group, their levels of education and their occupations may differ widely. Some may be blue-collar workers, others may have university jobs. However, caring for nature and for the environment brings these people together.
The EE programme of local groups has at least three aims: to inform people about environmental deterioration, to stimulate people to participate in future EE activities and to encourage people to join local environmental groups. So it means education for education, a stimulus to further learning processes. EE activities should therefore not be judged singly, but as part of a more comprehensive programme. The general public is the major target group of this programme.

* A paper based on information provided by IVN. The activities described here are activities of local EE groups in the Netherlands.

II

Nature guides: the backbone of local EE groups

The core of local EE groups is formed by members who have done a nature guide course. This course, redesigned recently, gives its students general knowledge of local EE activities.* It is not only an in-service course but also a major source for new members. Many non--members, having completed a nature guide course, often extend their membership when the course is finished.

As a vehicle for attracting new members and as a method of training them, the nature guide course is of great importance to local EE groups. Therefore, these courses are constantly improved upon and up-dated. The local EE groups themselves usually organize such courses, whilst the training of teachers for nature guide courses is being increasingly stimulated at regional level.

Nature guides are active in all parts of the local groups' educational programme. They take care of nature walks and excursions with children or adults, often with classes from local schools. They also organize more informal courses about nature in and near urban areas and organize slide shows, exhibitions and discussions. Describing what nature guides do is almost the same as describing the educational programme of local EE groups and that is what the next part of this paper is about.

A concise survey of local educational activities

Nature walks**

Nature walks and - fitting in with the Dutch low level country - cycling tours are aimed at introducing nature to the participants. Nowadays Dutch towns-people often have hardly any ready knowledge of wild plants or animals and probably know even less about why and where certain plants grow or animals live, about the relationships between certain plants and animals. These gaps in knowledge relate to knowledge of essential ecological processes and ecosystems.*** However, such knowledge is not mastered easily and quickly when one has to almost start from scratch. Therefore, nature walks are

* See Paper no. 6
** Including cycling tours
*** See Chapter 2, W.C.S.

II

chosen as a means to arouse public interest in these subjects, especially in simple things and, most of all, in appreciating nature and outdoor life. This is done because one hopes that the interest, once developed, will lead to a desire to learn more about nature and the environment. Of course it is impossible to explain everything in just one or even a few nature walks, but this is not the objective. It is also clear that not all participants of cycling tours or nature walks will want to attend a course about nature the following week, but if a number of them do, it would undoubtedly be a success. In terms used in Paper no. 1, this activity is rated an interest-arousing activity* in which a lot of people participate: more than 50,000 people took part in no less than 1687 nature walks and cycling tours in 1983 which were organized by 110 local IVN groups.**

Nature trails

Nature trails are a kind of self-service nature walks. Instead of being guided by a nature guide, one has to be one's own guide. Information may be provided in a booklet or by signs and exhibits along the trail. The advantages of nature trails are that they can be used without the presence of guides and that the information does not have to be repeated for each visitor. In theory this means that a large number of people may be reached with a rather modest input of time and work.

The basic principle of selling nature trail booklets in places with attractive scenery is that the buyers and users of these booklets will at least have some interest in nature. Nature trails with information along the trail itself may draw the attention of the casual passers-by more easily. Anyway, nature trails have for many years been a popular aid in environmental education and the cause for great zeal in local IVN groups. A new trail is often opened by the local burgomaster. It is a pity that the IVN 1983 census gives no data on the number of trails in use, the number of booklets published and the number of visitors of these nature trails.

* See Paper no. 1, page 3

** All figures have been taken from the IVN 1983 census. Many other local groups also organize nature walks and other educational activities about which, unfortunately, no data are available. In 1983 there were 133 local IVN associations.

II

Exhibitions

Visiting an exhibition may be less of a strain than taking part in, for example, nature walks. There is no need to rise early in the morning, no need to wear boots and sensible clothing and no need to fight one's way through thick and thorny bushes. Therefore, using exhibitions as an educational tool means aiming for a target group that is somewhat different from the one in nature walks. This is a good thing, of course, because one should not put all one's eggs in one basket, so to speak. Local EE groups need a well-balanced programme of activities, aimed at various target groups.

Organizing an exhibition enables a local group to focus people's attention on special topics. Visitors can subsequently extend their knowledge of this subject. The best subjects for exhibitions often are current major issues, such as acid rain.

In 1983 local IVN groups organized 121 exhibitions of which 56 were visited by 85,000 visitors. These include individual exhibitions and participations with a special exhibit in a larger exhibition. In many cases exhibition materials had been prepared by national environmental organizations.

Lectures

Lectures and slide shows are given for special audiences; people do not go to a lecture unless they are, to some extent, curious to know about it. This target tends to consist of people who are already interested in environmental conservation. Therefore, it may be assumed that lectures and slide shows are more suited for training and for "warming up" - that is, to keep the active members of a local environmental group enthusiastic - than for reaching new categories of the general public. Another aspect of slide and film shows is the use of audio-visual aids. Using and audio-visual aid is exposing people to second-hand experiences: to experiences of others recorded and represented by audio-visual means. Although this is sometimes unavoidable - because some vulnerable nature reserves are not open to the public - it is debatable whether these second-hand experiences really contribute to a greater awareness of nature conservation.
IVN local groups organized 415 lectures in 1983 which were attended by 15,000 visitors.

II

Botanical gardens

Local EE groups sometimes succeed in acquiring a piece of land to create a small botanical garden or what is known as a "natural garden". The municipality often helps by making such a plot available at a low fee or even free of charge. However, this is only the beginning: the job itself has to be done voluntarily by the members and to create such a garden may take many years! It is a special item on the varied programmes of local EE groups because this work is not of an intellectual nature as in giving lectures and courses. It is attractive to those volunteers who like to work with their hands, handling the soil and living creatures. As mentioned in Paper no. 1, it is essential that people are given opportunities to do something about nature conservation and environmental problems. In doing so, a local group should create a wide range of activities to meet the different preferences and needs of its members.

A "natural garden" as such is not an educational tool, except for those who work in it. However, having a "natural" or botanical garden at its disposal gives an EE group many educational opportunities for excursions, practical work, observations and even simple research projects. Co-operation with local schools can be very rewarding in that schoolchildren work in the garden or use it in their biology lessons.

Most gardens managed by local groups are not truly botanical gardens because the managers do not attempt to grow a varied collection of plants. The efforts are focused on local flora, trying to create typical local landscapes on a small scale or by recreating old-fashioned farmyards which are typical of the region. Sometimes animals too, are kept such as rabbits, ducks and sheep.

The IVN census unfortunately contains no data on the number of gardens managed by local IVN groups or about the number of activities and visitors.

Working in conservation areas

There is a lot of work to be done in the maintenance of conservation areas and the landscape. In the Netherlands conservation areas are often not really free from man's influence in that they are

yesterday's agricultural landscape. They derive their present forms from the activities of farmers in the past. In order to preserve these areas such activities have to be continued somehow. A lot of this work can be done by volunteers and is in fact carried out by volunteers. Strictly speaking, these activities are not truly educational but at least they arouse interest. However, it is important that activities are provided in which people can actually do something themselves! What is more, an educational aspect can easily be introduced into such activities, for instance by explaining why it is necessary and what the results may be.

The work to be done ranges from lopping willow trees to clearing heather, moorland and reedland, as well as preserving hedges and habitats.

In activities organized by local IVN groups in 1983 about 5,000 people contributed to the maintenance of conservation areas. This figure does not include the number of participants of the conservation camps organized by a special branch of IVN called WVK (Working group for educational conservation camps).

Courses

Apart from the nature guide courses mentioned before, local EE groups organize various short and longer courses, such as courses on bird-watching and courses aimed at getting to know the local environment (the so-called "green" or "basic" courses).

These courses offer the partcipants the opportunity to learn substantially more than many of the short-lived activities. The value of various kinds of courses in environmental education will be discussed in Paper no. 5, so there is no need to give much attention to this topic here. However, it is worth noting that the courses belong to the realm of the educational activities proper.*

In 1983 there were 52 nature guide courses with about 1700 participants. Some of these courses started in 1982 and a number will be continued in 1984, so it is difficult to give a precise

* See Paper no. 1, page 4

figure for one year. The reason for this is that most nature guide courses take more than one year. In addition to the nature guide courses, local IVN groups organized 102 other courses, which were attended by 2440 participants.

Publicity

There is no sense in organizing educational activities if there are no people willing to learn from these activities. Therefore, advertising is of great importance to local EE groups, although such a group may not be able to pay for commercial advertisements. If there is no choice at all, there is only one thing to do: the so-called free publicity , that is: try to make newspapers and other news agencies communicate your message to the public without paying for it. It is not as difficult as it seems. Nowadays there are door-to--door newspapers that live off their advertising fees alone. Those newspapers need local news for their readers and information about local activities is just what they want. However, this is not the only way to get free publicity.

A good relationship with the press is not only important to get the necessary publicity, but it may also give the local EE group a chance to bring conservation issues - in brief or longer articles - to the notice of the public.

Many local groups also feel an internal need for communication. This happens when a local EE group grows so fast that it has to be split up into subgroups. Having split up into smaller subgroups, some members may discover that they are not as well-informed about what is going on as before. There will then be the need for internal communication on the EE group activities: an internal newsletter or circular may be required.

Mainstreams of the educational programme

So far individual educational activities have been mentioned and it looks as if there is no cohesion in the educational programmes. However, this is not the case. In fact three mainstreams of interconnected activities may be distinguished:

- adult educational activities
- working for and with schools
- activities in youth programmes

The adult educational activities have been dealt with under the heading "Courses", but the other two mainstreams need further explanation.

Working for and with schools is usually regarded as quite an important aspect by local EE groups. Many of them try to offer extensive programmes to local schools. Such programmes may consist of nature walks for schoolchildren or for small groups - in different seasons and in different interesting areas - as well as corresponding activities within the school. The programme is often drawn up in consultation with the school teachers. Special "school guides" working groups in local IVN associations are responsible for organizing activities for schools.

In 1983 no less than 81 IVN groups organized activities for local schools and 58,000 pupils took part in these activities.

The exact number of children taking part in youth programmes organized by local IVN groups in 1983 is not known. The organization of activities for youth groups or helping them organize various conservation activities so far does not seem to have developed to the same extent as working with and for schools. However, 36 IVN associations had their own youth groups in 1983. These youth groups hold regular meetings for their members and have their own activities.

D.A. Huitzing
March 1985

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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN.

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Paper no. 2b

Monday 13 May 1985

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES OF LOCAL GROUPS AIMED AT THE GENERAL PUBLIC. A PAPER BASED ON THE SITUATION IN BELGIUM.

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(1) GUIDED (NATURE) WALKS

The guided nature walk is the oldest and most widespread form of environmental education (EE) organized by local voluntary organizations.

Guided nature walks for the general public are a direct effect of the nature guide course which has been organized since 1966 by the Centrum voor Natuurbeschermingseducatie (CVN): the Environmental Education Centre, a non-profit organization, in Flanders. (There had been guided nature walks before, which, however, were organized by natural history associations for their members only.)

The authorities in Belgium - at all levels - had very much failed to be active in EE and that is why the CVN decided to form groups of trained volunteers within a short period of time so that the ideas of nature conservation and environmental management would be more widely known. These volunteers, known as nature guides, had to finance everything themselves, especially in the initial stage. Therefore, they chose the least expensive, yet most direct form of EE: the guided (nature) walk.

The guided walk is the most direct method of EE. Personal contact is more effective than any other medium. The nature guide bridges the gap between the things observed and the public by introducing topical

aspects, answering questions (and eliciting questions), encourage discussions, and so on.

This form of EE continues to be increasingly successful. Both urban planted areas (parks, botanical gardens) and rural natural areas and some (larger) nature reserves are visited with a nature guide. Attention is paid to not only specific subjects relating to nature but also to general environmental themes (environmental problems) and elements of cultural historical landscape. The walks last about 2 hours (full day walks are rare). It is not the distance covered that counts but the things observed and the explanation given. The public is mixed, that is, children, adults, families. Each year some 200,000 people take part in guided walks.

The walks are announced in the media (radio, newspapers and weekly magazines), posters or on hoardings in the walking area itself. More and more nature guide groups issue their own pocket-size calendars containing the times, dates and places and useful information of the walks planned throughout the year.

EE walks in areas of special architectural or historic interest are organized by town guides but they have a mainly tourist-recreational bias. Truly critical enterprises are the town walks organized by associations such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty and the "Brussels-inside-out" project, urban critical sight-seeing coach-tours through the city centre of Brussels. The town exploratory walks of the Belgian Radio and Television and the King Baudouin Foundation, for the protection of buildings of historic interest (1984), should also be mentioned in this context.

(2) NATURE TRAILS (ENVIRONMENTAL TRAILS)

Although infrastructure costs of nature trails are still relatively low, this form of EE emanating from voluntary groups was established at a much later date than the nature walks. In fact the break-through only occurred when the authorities took some interest in this EE method (the "woods learning paths" of the Rivers and Other Inland Waters & Forestry Board and the Planted Area Warden Services).

Nature trails are described in leaflets and on teaching signs along the trail. From the volunteers/nature guides' angle, nature trails form the complement to the guidance of nature walks.

Nature trails are laid down in urban and rural green and natural areas. Tourist-oriented town paths are mapped out in towns of historic interest. They are mainly aimed at foreign visitors and only focus on positive elements (ancient buildings and monuments). They do not directly contribute to the development of a critical attitude of the inhabitants themselves towards the structure and development of their urban environment.

(3) LECTURES/SLIDE SHOWS

Especially in winter lectures or talks for the general public are organized by nature guides and/or natural history associations. The lectures often have a preparatory function for the summer activities planned in the area in question.

(4) EXHIBITIONS/INFORMATION STANDS

Nature guide groups, natural history associations and related organizations design and produce EE exhibitions and information stands. In view of the costs of such an exhibition they are usually produced at the national level and supplied to local groups.

For example:
"Conservation of the environment" (CVN in co-operation with the Netherlands Society for Conservation of Natural Monuments)
"Nature in your garden" (CVN)
"Open spaces in Flanders" (King Baudouin Foundation)
"Reptiles and amphibians" (RANA/De Wielewaal).

Information stands are present at all kinds of public manifestations related to nature and the environment. EE materials are usually sold at these stands.

(5) COURSES

Many years of organized, guided nature walks have resulted in a regular "walking public": people who come back to take part in another walk or who join different walks in succession. The problem that then faced the organizers was the following:

- the walks are meant to reach a widely general public and should therefore have a fairly simple character;
- some participants require more information because they have acquired some basic knowledge (as a result of, among other things, having taken part in walks).

On the other hand, the current nature guide course is too long and too heavy going to be able to immediately cater for the latter category of walkers. As an intermediate solution short "green" basic courses were organized by nature guides themselves (called "Nature in sight", "Guide to nature" or "See-understand-preserve nature"). The courses are quite simple in that they consist of a series of nature walks, done in logical order so that the participant can further extend the knowledge gained. In addition, a few theoretical background lessons are given. The entire course consists of ten activities spread over 6 months at the most. The courses, aimed at adults, were started in 1980. The number of basic courses is rising slowly. Some problems concerning training and education of teachers and mentors still need to be solved.

There was likewise a need for specific EE courses for children. The first one was started in the province of Limburg in 1984. The mini-course "Youth and nature" is aimed at children aged 12 to 14 years. It consists of excursions and indoor activities. This initiative may be followed in other provinces in the near future.

In Flanders the nature guide course is organized by the CVN which is officially recognized by the Minsitry of Netherlands Culture as a national body for sociocultural training. The CVN is responsible for the planning and organization of the course. The local EE groups, however, are drawn into the course activities as much as possible. Volunteers are involved in the guidance of the course to the best of their abilities and they supply the teachers and excursion leaders. The co-operation between national and regional levels ensures that

the nature guide course has the required minimum of uniformity throughout the country and, at the same time, is up-to-date with regard to local circumstances and requirements.

(6) EE INFRASTRUCTURES

In Flanders the authorities have not really exerted themselves to develop EE infrastructures. In a few large centres much frequented children's farms were established. Ghent has its well-known School Museum and the educational Bourgoyen-Ossemeersen reserve. Bruges has a nature centre in the Beisbroek natural area. Visitors' centres were established near state forests by the Planted Area Warden Services.

In view of the required investments, volunteer groups can as a rule only form a complement to the authorities in the development and management of EE infrastructures. This complementary part is usually restricted to guided tours of parties (e.g. botanical garden of the State University of Ghent).

Sometimes a more active part is played. The Dodoens garden in Schilde (reconstruction of a Renaissance herb garden) was laid out by a local working party (in collaboration with the Ecological Life and Cultivation Association). In Genk and Schilde environmental parks are being laid out by volunteers. In Schilde the first thematic flower and insect garden (Beegarden), a project of a local volunteer-nature guide group, will be opened in June 1985.

Volunteers are also active in EE management of some large private enterprises. For instance, tens of thousands of visitors are shown round in the Antwerp Zoo (which has its own EE service) and in the "Het Zwin" nature reserve in Knokke.

(7) MAGAZINES

Some local EE groups contribute articles to EE magazines in which the activities aimed at the general public are announced and information is given about nature and the environment within the region or in general.

Other EE organizations and services likewise publish their own magazines. For example, children's farms have their magazines (e.g. *'t Neerhofblad* of the Children's, Adolescents' and Families' Farm "Het Neerhof" in Dilbeek) and so have the Environmental Service and Pedagogic Centre of the city of Ghent (*Kroonblaadje*).

(8) ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

The division between environmental education and environmental action, distinctly marked in theory, is becoming increasingly less sharply marked in practice. In addition to the EE long-term action, nature guides, also as a result of their training, clearly feel the great need for action against actual threats to e.g. natural areas, through direct environmental campaigns.

Consequently, nature guides are found in most action groups in Flanders. Their presence provides the link between educational activities and campaigns (e.g. nature walks in a threatened area for which the action group is campaigning) or substantiates campaigns - notably with regard to natural historical information (e.g. stock-taking work). Therefore, local EE groups count both EE and environmental action among their objectives. The ultimate goal is, after all, the maintenance of the quality of the (natural) environment.

P. Stryckers
March 1985

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN.

HEEZE, The Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985

Paper no. 3 "EDUCATING LOCALLY, THINKING GLOBALLY" *

Introduction

No one in IUCN circles will be wondering what the words of this title mean, although they have been formulated differently earlier on. For there are global environmental problems, the solution of which will partly be found in making the public aware of their relationship to these problems, thereby increasing their feeling of joint responsibility for them. In brief, this is the task of environmental education.

At any rate, this is the task which the State Advisory Commission on Environmental Education, participating in this conference, sees as its ideal. It does not mean that the views, expressed in this paper, are already common property. It would be better to say that they may be a new direction for environmental education, which many of us are aiming at. But there is a great difference between theory and practice ...

Unfortunately, reality is not as simple as the few words of the title suggest. For what is the real solution of a problem, what characteristics does it possess, why is education necessary when there are myriads of regulations and technical measures which must prevent our environment from deterioration? And finally, what are the problems that environmental education itself will have to face in carrying out its task?

Human action, especially that directed towards the fulfilment of material needs, takes place within economic structures and is a reflection of the norms of the society to which the economy is attached. The interaction of the two, identified as necessary from

* This paper originates from discussions in the State Advisory Commission for Environmental Education, on a new policy paper, published as "A basic assessment of environmental education", Utrecht, 1985

an economic point of view and desirable from the individual's point of view, has led to a set of environmental problems in our part of the world, which are difficult to solve.

Constraints in problem-solving

The solutions to be adopted are mostly of a legal or technical nature. This can hardly be objected to, but one should realize that this kind of "solution" is usually directed towards the outcome of human actions and not to its causes. It leads to a situation in which the solution of a problem usually causes new problems. Unaware of this, we have gradually become part of an exhaustive economy. Such an economy does not honour nature's long-term conditions, if we are all to survive. For this reason any short-term solution to be found for a problem should be viewed in the light of a long-term solution.

Not only does the system of the industrialized world have effects in time, it also possesses a spatial aspect. One could say that our material wealth is due to the shifting of a considerable number of our problems to other parts of the world. Therefore, our actions have consequences for the possibilities we leave for the development of others. This creates a responsibility that cannot easily be overrated.

In solving problems, man is inclined to seek solutions that are as concrete as possible. The danger here is that we may not realize sufficiently that both problem and solution are part of greater problems. Thus one gets involved in the functioning of several sectors of society. Ideally, problems should be solved along the lines of all-embracing strategies which should be drawn up in advance. Scenarios, being developed in many countries, are an early attempt to this end.

Summing up, our actions have several dimensions; to us, as environmental educators, the following are of the greatest importance:

- time (short and long term),
- place (short and long distance)
- theme (narrow and broad view).

It is clear that there are major consequences for environmental education. It is no longer enough to make people think that creating nature reserves solves problems if the causes of their establishment are not dealt with. It will not do saying that exhaust catalysts

or lead-free petrol will solve the problem of acid rain, if nothing is done about restricting the use of cars. And, likewise, it is not enough to discuss the disappearance of tropical forests if the macro-economic dependence of the exporting countries is not taken into account, too.

Consequences for environmental education

A thorough grasp of the complex relationships of our society is a distant ideal which nobody in our society will ever fully attain. It does not mean, however, that the individual will not at all be able to meet the needs imposed on him by an ever-increasing complex society. Ideally, everyone should have sufficient knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to make careful choices. His thinking should be guided by principles that diverge from the current views of the western world. Some of these principles are:

- recognition of the existence and human submission to ecological laws;
- coherence in disciplines; development of a holistic world view;
- a critical eye on technical and legal measures;
- readiness to analyse and relativize one's own skills;
- fitting one's own action in a global view;
- insight into the limitations of causal-quantitative approaches.

But we all know how often decision-making is guided by other than rational considerations.

The environment's quality is determined by human action. Everyone, wherever in the world, is involved in processes leading to that determination, however different one may think of the relationships between man and nature. But it is not education's task to thrust its norms and values upon those who never asked for this. Nor is environmental education meant to show the ideal society, ecologically speaking, or suggest that each deviation would be undesirable. And, furthermore, it is not meant to point out specific offenders, since we ourselves depend on current economic processes. But it is meant to stimulate emancipation, the rational weighing of interests, the use of common sense, provoke assessments and independence in the making of choices.

This leads us to the formulation of the main goal for environmental

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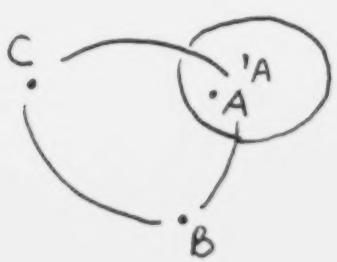
education: "To become conscious of the relationships between man, nature and society and to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes, necessary to make careful choices in this respect".

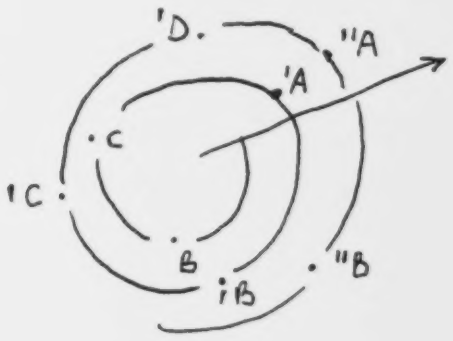
The educational process

Taking this goal as a starting point for our further development of thought, it is important to say something about the educational process itself. The words "instructional objective" may be subject to many misunderstandings, especially if the educator has different intentions in mind than those being educated. When individuals are willing to solve an environmental problem in their own surroundings, they expect knowledge and skills from the educator to do so. But the latter may also wish to bring his audience on a slightly higher level of understanding and to explain that a new problem rises behind each solution. This is a situation of solving a problem versus an educational objective. Although it is not the aim of educational activities, reaching a foreseeable, intermediate end situation constitutes a necessary step in a process that tries to bring us a step further in our thinking.
Schematically this leads to the following.
As an educational process, the educator creates a learning situation which presents the participants with solution 'A in relation to a problem, as perceived by them. This solution is found via the time-determined steps B and C:



In the sense of traditional conservation education, the circle is thus closed. The observation (A), through experience, knowledge and attitude formation (B, C), led to activity ('A), which is related to the goal of A. This way people have a perspective for their urge to to act.

In our opinion, however, it is clear that we usually have to deal with a partial problem with a partial solution. This thought will lead to the recognition of underlying factors and hence to a renewed analysis, via 'B and 'C, etc. This is to be seen as a rising spiral:



The way education should preferably deal with it, is not the one between A and B, etc., but from A to 'A and ''A, as indicated by the arrow. Thus a process is started which factually never ends and which, with each result achieved, raises new questions. This is how the road to the causes of our conflict with nature will be opened. Environmental education that only tries to solve problems and does not increase awareness may be useful to a certain extent, but will probably not lead to the understanding required for a new way of dealing with nature.

Where do these goals lead to? And why does the educator do all this work, knowing that the end will never be reached? Here we find ourselves faced with the problem of formulating learning goals from the educator's point of view. He has taken up the difficult job of setting off new ways of thinking with people. In attaining this object, he will have to make use of partial strategies which are directed towards different target groups. They can be summed up as follows:

- interest in environmental problems;
- knowledge of and understanding of the background of problems;
- societal analysis;
- formation of an integrated world view;
- attitude forming;
- strategies for action.

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These phases, which are not necessarily completed in the sequence given, are the cement between successive problems and solutions. Together with the rising spiral, they form a strategy for environmental education.

Categories for target groups

In order to attain specific instructional objectives in environmental education, target groups have to be distinguished. There is nothing new about that and it has been applied for many years. But the criteria for selection usually differ widely with the various organizations. Age, rate of influence, rate of being organized, etc., determine the outcome of this selection process. Having the advantage of a possible wide variety in target groups, one can also identify large systematic gaps in this approach.

People bring about changes in the environment - consciously or subconsciously. What differs between them are nature, intensity and scope (of both time and space) concerning those changes. This means that, if the educator wishes to work specifically towards target groups, he should know of these variables. It also means that people should not only be approached according to, for example, their specific personal characteristics, but more so their position in society. We would now like to suggest the following division of target groups:

- persons as part of social groups
- persons with an educational task
- persons involved in decision making.

Generally speaking, we cannot state that one group is more important than the other. But we must realize that specific target groups are related to specific levels of a problem and thus to the achievement of specific goals. Working this out would be the task of curriculum development in environmental education. Unfortunately this has hardly come off the ground.

As long as environmental education as a systematic approach exists, the majority of its activities have been directed towards persons as individuals, whether or not in groups: the general public ("Everybody is welcome to join some kind of activity"). Sometimes there is a subdivision into, for example, schoolchildren, parents, farmers, recreationists and the like. Most local volunteer groups in the Netherlands work with this general target group, whether or

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not subdivided. In the 25 years of its existence this approach has undoubtedly achieved important results: a generally but globally spread understanding that man's place in nature has become too dominant. One may wonder whether this has succeeded in elucidating the structural, societal character of this problem.
Therefore, it also insufficiently succeeded in equipping people for the ability to make long-term choices consciously when nature is at stake.
People with an educational task are mostly teachers at primary and secondary schools and university or other higher education, centres for adult education, youth leaders, extension officials, etc. They usually have no specific task in environmental education, but certain aspects of it may be dealt with in their normal work. One cannot say that - at least in the Netherlands - a lot has been done for these groups with a structural nature. Although projects, material and experiments were developed, environmental problems, generally speaking, do not occupy a fixed position in their work.
Decision makers take decisions in all kinds of areas concerning nature. The decisions are made on the basis of their responsibility within the relevant specific area and, therefore, the possible side-effects must not be overlooked. In our opinion this group of persons takes the "real" decisions about the quality of nature. Usually these persons and those who are involved in the preparation of their decisions, are associated with social action: "Politicians, civil servants, captains of industry and commerce and bank directors should be put pressure on", is a well-known expression. Certainly, there is something true in this phrase but they, too, have (had) their schooling and in-service training. Vested interests, economic considerations, competence and the dependence on existing, well--established structures in themselves, however, do not contribute to the clarification of how environmental education is capable of changing anything. As far as we know there is little systematic knowledge about the ways and means of approaching such groups of people. But as we are running out of time as regards solving environmental problems, this groups cannot be ignored.

The World Conservation Strategy

How can the foregoing be related to the philosophy of the WCS? Indeed, it is this philosophy of achieving sustainable societies, that we educators try to bring into our work. The art is to convert

an ecological analysis into societal action: here and in the third world as well. If that is what the WCS really means to say - and we believe it does - then we feel that the kind of environmental education we suggest indeed contributes to its objectives.

Practice

Now the final point to be dealt with is the most difficult of all: putting theory into practice. For this purpose we would like to soon introduce some brand-new learning material for the upper level of higher general and secondary education. The fact that this material deals with the school system and this conference with the general public is not of essential importance. In fact we argue that curriculum development for both types of target groups is necessary, although their circumstances and thus the intensity and wording of the didactic concept may differ considerably. Consequently, this illustration is meant to explain the possible use of thoughts as laid down above.

The name of this learning-kit, consisting of a teacher's manual, pupil's textbook and picture-book, is "Energy balance". In this material attention is focussed on energy. But the term "energy" is used in a wide sense. Food, natural resources and labour belong to it: as forms of energy itself or as material into which energy has been put. Dealing with energy thus means dealing with the world as such: formerly, nowadays and in the future. This way the concept of "Energy balance" throws light on questions such as development, food scarcity, unemployment, poverty and environmental deterioration in the third world as related to our industrial world.

The authors of the material had the following starting points:

- Environmental education aims at increasing the understanding of how man depends, ecologically and economically, on his environment.
- Environmental education shows the problems with which man is confronted, in relation to other problems or places in the world.
- Environmental education shows society as a mobile system, as a process, ruled by man within certain ecological and societal conditions. Therefore, it makes it clear that man himself can participate in the structuring of society.

- Environmental education not only clarifies problems, it also tries to indicate short-term and long-term solutions.
- Environmental education offers alternative choices and shows ways along which changes may be brought about, including their constraints.
- Environmental education may help to lay a basis for another lifestyle, showing alternatives and discussing ways of materialization.

From these starting points the authors of "Energy balance" had the following objectives for students in mind:

1. To offer understanding of the natural conditions for life on earth.
2. To raise awareness of the specific importance of energy as a condition for life on earth.
3. To offer understanding of the relation between economic activities and the development of the environment.
4. To offer understanding of the ecological and economic problems which they meet in their own surroundings and those perceived from a distance.
5. To show how the relationships between such problems can be found in daily life.
6. To offer understanding of the conditions for fundamental solutions and the consequences of their materialization for society and the individual.
7. To help to take up and develop a position concerning important contemporary problems and to become aware of its consequences in making choices.

The didactic concept of this material may briefly be described as follows. It takes the view that the student's life is central in the educational process: the so-called life-oriented concept. It embraces the world around the pupil and far away; culture and nature; in the past, present and future. The influences from and upon students; their possibilities and impossibilities of making choices.

A selection has been made from certain knowledge, understanding and attitude aspects which are necessary for a thorough understanding of the elements "environment" and "energy". The knowledge aspects aim at enriching the students' experiences; their generalization shows which place individuals have in the big world. This knowledge is largely based upon ecological science, on knowledge about economics

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on a world-wide scale and on history. Therefore, the main division of the material, from a thematic point of view, is: energy and nature, energy and history, and energy and economics. Knowledge may lead to the mastering of a framework of notions with which understanding gradually grows. Understanding of society and its functioning, understanding of his/her own existence, and understanding of the ways of tackling or accepting problems. Besides, it is important to arrive at an attitude towards information, towards the readiness of thinking about how society and the individual himself should develop in the future. Thus "values" can be conveyed: values in relation to nature and other people. But to a large extent students must develop their own values.
This learning material tries to show the way to students with respect to the development of their understanding and views, step by step in elements of life, as described above. In order to achieve the objectives of "Energy balance", its 3 parts (teacher's manual, pupil's textbook and picturebook) have been split up into 3 phases: introduction and problem identification; information and analysis; forming of opinions and anticipative thinking (in relation to the future).

We do realize that the short description of this new learning-kit is incomplete and fragmentary. However, it may give a global understanding of the ways in which a general philosophy on environmental education can be changed into a concrete didactic approach, both within and outside school.
In order to get a more thorough grasp on the matter, it is our intention of using the introduction time at the conference to explain some of the ideas described above. This will be done on the basis of some practical examples which have hopefully been carried out by volunteer groups at the time.

Chris Maas Geesteranus
State Advisory Commission for Environmental Education
March 1985

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN.

HEEZE, The Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985

Paper no. 4 "HOW TO ORGANIZE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BY VOLUNTARY GROUPS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL" *

Introduction

In this paper a description is given of how a local environmental education (EE) organization can work and how such a group can organize a number of educational activities. The general idea behind working with local EE groups is outlined in conference Paper no. 1: "On the role of voluntary associations in environmental education".

Local EE organizations, voluntary and professional

The local EE organizations we are referring to exist in various specific forms in Belgium and in the Netherlands. In general, two main groups can be identified:

- EE organizations with a paid professional staff
- EE organizations of which all members are volunteers.

The professional EE organizations at the local level are School Biologist Services or Environmental Education Centres. The number of professionals employed is seldom very high. Often volunteers work there as well or there is close co-operation with one or more volutary groups active in the same town or area. Such professional EE organizations are mostly run by the local government. In their internal organization professional EE organizations differ considerably from voluntary EE organizations.** Because of this fact

* A paper based on the situation in the Netherlands.

** In addition, there may also be a considerable difference with regard to motivation to participate in the organization's activities.

this paper is focussed on the organization of voluntary EE groups. This is also a subject about which not a great deal has been published, neither in literature on organization theory nor in literature on environmental education.

There may also be a lot of difference between local voluntary EE organizations. In spite of the many differences among these groups there is also a number of common features such as:

- Membership is on a voluntary basis. However, members may have a professional background in nature conservation, environmental management or education.

- The objective of the organization is to provide an environmental educational activities programme aimed at the local public. This may be the sole objective of the organization (which in that case is purely an EE organization) or one objective among many others (for example, the protection of birds, stimulation of nature study or conservation of the environment).

  A marked distinction should be made between organizations that organize activities for their own members only, and organizations that organize educational activities for others, for example aimed at the general public.

- Besides organizing EE activities, the organizations are continuously trying to enroll new members.

- There is often a provision for introducing new members to the group's activities,for instance a basic course or a nature guide course.

- The local organization may belong to or be associated with some nation-wide organization or may be fully independent.

- The local organization may be an association or a foundation.*

* The difference according to Dutch law is that in an association the members elect a board, whereas a foundation has no members and its board itself takes care of filling the seats on the board.

- The activities are paid for by money obtained as fees for courses, as membership fees, by fund-raising activities and as subsidies from local governments.

- The number of active members will rarely be less than ten or more than a few hundred.

With these common characteristics a provisional picture of such organizations is given. In Paper no. 2 the environmental education programme of local EE groups has been described. That paper also gives some idea of what such organizations are like. Now the focus is more on what these groups do, why they do it and how they do it.

Advantage of local voluntary EE groups

As mentioned before, it is often thought that the environmentalists' message may reach the general public via the mass media, but that is probably not what really happens. The influence of the mass media is not only often overestimated, but it is also clear that the media cannot provide the activities that are needed. The mass media can inform people about what is happening in the world, but that is not to be mistaken for education. It is a pity, however, that the mass media's primary aim usually seems to be just to entertain people.

Reading about pollution in a newspaper or watching nature on television does not automatically lead to the goals set by environmental educationalists. If it would, the world would be quite different from what it is now. It is clear, however, that mass media coverage of environmental problems does not lead to spectacular results. But it is important, although it is not enough.* What is needed are EE activities that provide participants with opportunities to see things for themselves, to do things themselves, to feel how things are, to do something about fighting the deterioration of the environment. "At the highest level education involves the internalization of values and this can

* It is not the purpose of this paper to suggest that coverage of environmental problems by the mass media is superfluous.

only be achieved through personal experience in the field or in the imagination. The listener of the viewer can never expect to gain the depth of understanding in any activity earned by the doer, involved with all his senses. Education must be about the real world, physical and intellectual." *

- People who feel concerned about the quality of the environment also need ways to express their feelings. Local EE organizations create opportunities to do this. This is an important argument for stimulating local voluntary EE groups and it may well be their most important advantage.

- Environmental problems seem to become more and more pressing. Because of these problems it is necessary to inform as many people as possible. Therefore, EE activities have to be everywhere. Nature walks, exhibitions, presentations and courses have to take place where people are: in countless villages and towns, even in the remotest parts of the country. This can only be done by creating a dense network of local EE organizations that are willing to organize these educational activities. So the second advantage of local voluntary EE groups is that, with their educational activities, they can reach a large number of people. Moreover, they can use more suitable methods and reach target groups that the mass media have less access to. This advantage grows as more and more local voluntary EE groups co-operate in a regional or nation-wide network.

- As mentioned in Paper no. 1, in addition local voluntary EE groups are able to mobilize the knowledge and work potential of quite a number of people. Often the members belong to the local community. Moreover, the knowledge mobilized is in the first place knowledge about the local environmental situation. This specific knowledge may not be available in organizations that work on a nation-wide scale. These potentials constitute the third advantage of such local EE groups.

* Sean Mc B. Carson: "Environmental Education, Principles and Practice", London 1978, pp. 9-10. One may add to this quotation that environmental education should not be restricted to the intellectual and empirical world, but should also reach out into the affective domain.

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On the other hand, local voluntary groups can create a stimulating learning environment for many learners, by working in small and independent groups with an informal atmosphere. In order to do so, "an organization must be innovative as well as democratic if it is to provide an environment conducive to learning." * Again a potential advantage - the fourth - for local EE groups.

Education requires, among other things, a reliable source of information. The reliability of an educational organization, however, is not to be taken for granted. The information supplied will be checked by distrusting learners and will have to stand such tests. Yet it is clear that independent organizations are more likely to be viewed as potentially reliable sources of information than others. Even government agencies are sometimes distrusted because governments somehow seem to be involved in polluting the environment, by issuing licences to polluting industries or by developing new industrial activities. Being a potential reliable source of information is the fifth advantage of local voluntary EE organizations.

Taking the local surroundings as a starting point is a didactically sound way for environmental education. The areas and subjects to be taught can gradually be expanded, in accordance with the level of understanding of the participants.

The existence of local environmental groups and of the EE activities they organize may evoke a new local governmental policy with regard to environmental education.

One of the most obvious advantages comes last. It constitutes the low costs connected with the work of local voluntary EE organizations, compared with those of professional EE organizations. Professional EE organizations at the local level can only operate if the local government or others are willing to pay for their expenses, which is often not the case. For example, in the Dutch province of North Brabant, which has 2.1 million inhabitants, there are only two professional organizations at the municipal level and about

* M.S. Knowles, "The modern practice of adult education. Andragogy versus pedagogy "New York, 1970, page 61

90 local voluntary EE groups.* Voluntary EE organizations can do the job where a local government is unwilling or unable to pay enough for it. This is not the strongest argument for voluntary activities, yet it is a very practical one.

What is necessary for a local voluntary EE organization?

A local voluntary EE group is an organization in which volunteers organize environmental educational activities, aimed at the local population, without being paid for this work. They may, however, receive a compensation for their expenses.

Because the members organize the educational activities on a voluntary basis, the activities have to be attractive and satisfactory for them. It would really be a pity if a few very active members would try to do all the work that is to be done, because such a thing will not and cannot work. There is a lot to be done in the field of environmental education, especially at the local level. Therefore, a good division of labour is a necessity.

The local population is of course not a completely homogeneous group, but consists of people with all kinds of interests, wishes and ideas. One single kind of educational activity cannot be expected to interest all of them. On the supply side of environmental education there has to be a wide variety of possible educational activities, so that as many people as possible will find something to their liking.

* In Eindhoven and in Breda. A third municipal EE organization is expected to start soon in 's-Hertogenbosch. It is difficult to estimate how many people are active in about 90 local voluntary EE groups, but the 31 local IVN groups, have about 1500 active members. IVN groups, however, tend to have more members than other local EE groups.
The EE consultant at the provincial level is not included in this short summary. As mentioned before, the professional and voluntary EE organizations active in the same area co-operate as much as possible.

For that reason, general rules for a local voluntary EE group are:

- make the job attractive for the volunteers;
- see to it that there is a reasonable division of work among the volunteers available;
- make sure that there is a regular and wide-ranging educational programme.

In order to do so a local voluntary EE group needs at least a lot of enthusiasm - the main driving force - as well as knowledge and good ideas. Furthermore, one would need some keen and also some money. If these "ingredients" are available more volunteers may be brought in and more money can be raised. Enthusiasm and the quality of the educational activities will no doubt attract more and more members. Every new member will bring his own ideas, skills and knowledge and they are all opportunities for starting new activities. A local EE organization that grabs at those opportunities will certainly grow and prosper and, what is more, will certainly be successful in environmental education.

Dynamics of a developing local EE group

There is no need for a local voluntary EE group to grow bigger than the amount of work to be done. At present there seems to be no end to it. However, to be oversized is not healthy and a voluntary organization has its limits, especially with regard to management. Yet it is difficult to say where the limits are, as the limits themselves may shift, too, for example in a growing organization. On the other hand, small is not always beautiful. A local voluntary EE organization needs an area that is large enough to recruit a sufficient number of volunteers. In a sparsely populated area quite a large region may be needed, whereas in densely populated parts of the country a lot of local EE groups may be located closely together. There is no rule of thumb for this, except that a newly started group should not be too small. Some members may lose heart quickly or may for some reason or other stop taking part in activities. However, this depends very much on the enthusiasm of the people who start a new group. Therefore, it may be better to start with a small but enthusiastic group than with a large indifferent group.

Anyway, a newly started group must grow. This is because of the wide range of specialist knowledge needed and because of the wide range of activities to be organized. It is not to be expected that a small group could ever cover all of these. Knowledge is needed not only with regard to education, school systems and teaching. The activities range from activities for kindergarten children to adult education, whilst almost every conceivable environmental subject may be a topic for an educational activity. Phase one of a newly started EE group is therefore devoted to expanding the small group of initial pioneers.

Expanding the activities

As soon as the group starts to grow, it can expand its activities. There are several directions the group can take and some of them may be taken simultaneously. It is possible to try new activities that have not been organized before by the group, but it is also useful to learn about the surroundings in order to raise the level of knowledge about topics such as local plants, animals, nature conservation and pollution. Another sensible thing would be to find out as much as possible about potential learners or target groups, for instance how they can be reached, how they are organized and what they would like to learn. Schools, farmers' associations, women's associations and the general public are examples of possible target groups.

Furthermore, fund-raising may become important, as well as creating good relations with the municipality, nature conservation organizations and neighbouring voluntary associations. There is no need for groups to work in isolation, on the contrary, only a strong network of co-operating voluntary groups can be truly effective.

Managing the large organization

A small group may start with joint decisions on questions arising. However, as soon as the number of members begins to grow and the group organizes more and more activtities, the necessity will be felt to change this way of managing the group's affairs. The tasks to be done may become too numerous, too time-consuming or too difficult to be divided among the group's members present at a meeting.

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It will then be necessary to find officials who are willing and able to be responsible for certain tasks for a certain period of time. This way a number of specialized functions is created. The group becomes a more mature organization with an executive board and, for example, a chairman, a secretary and a treasurer.

Obviously there is a lot to be done in the second phase in the life of a new voluntary group. The sheer number of activities may easily confuse the enthusiasts still active from the first phase in which everything was reasonably clear to everybody. What is happening is that the organization develops increasingly more different functions in order to cope with many new requirements.

The group now needs a clear policy to steer through this eventful period. Somebody has to formulate such a policy. For this task a steering committee or board is needed. As mentioned, the time in which all the group's activities and problems could be discussed with every member is practically over. However, this is a tricky problem. The division of tasks may result in loss of contact with members who are not so involved in making the group's general policy. The democratic solution, that is, presenting proposals about the policy to be followed to the general meeting and letting them decide, is necessary but it is not enough. General meetings are not held all that often. The group does not only need a clear policy but also a clear structure and some means to communicate with everybody involved.

A possibility of overcoming these dangers is to create working groups for the execution of certain tasks. This enables more members to contribute to the things that have to be done and, consequently, keeps them involved in one or more activities. It reduces the risk of alienation. In the structure of the large voluntary organization small working groups remain the source of ideas, activities and identification.

Specific tasks may then be assigned to these working groups and every member may be asked to participate in at least one working group, preferably the one most suited to the best of his or her interests and abilities. A working group may be responsible for creating nature trails or for organizing nature walks or for the

training of new members or for organizing EE courses.

This kind of division of work at the same time creates a need for integration. The various working groups may grow apart and that may be the end of the association. This, again, is one of the responsibilities of the steering committee or board. In fact it is their primary task: to maintain a feeling of working together for the same goals and to create a common policy which is shared by most if not all members. To be able to do this the steering group needs good relations with the various working groups. It has to know their plans and problems in order to be able to deal with them. Regular meetings between the steering committee and representatives of the various working groups may give the organization enough stability and flexibility to divide tasks as much as possible while keeping a closely knitted structure in which everybody can work for the agreed goals on the basis of a common policy. Yet this does not solve the problem of keeping all members informed about what is going on. For this purpose regular meetings with everybody involved may be used, for example twice a year, together with some kind of newsletter.

Organizing environmental education in the long run

All these internal arrangements are aimed at maintaining membership figures, enthusiasm, ideas and skills gained in the previous phases, in order to create a stable basis for the continuation of activities and further development. In making these arrangements, the group has again entered a new phase of its life, its third one. The internal organization now has a more definite form and the successful developments in the previous phases are continued.

A complete picture cannot be given of all possible developments in voluntary EE groups in just a few pages. What has been given is merely a brief summary of the possibilities. A great deal more is possible than what has been described here. The life of a local voluntary EE group will not always be easy, but keen and creative members will usually find solutions to the problems which they encounter, bearing in mind that environmental education is a long-term affair. Not only because it takes people time - often a lot of time - to absorb what they learn, but also because there will always be new learners. Environmental problems are not the only

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argument for environmental education. There is also a pedagogical responsibility to help children and young people to find ways to live with their environment which nowadays is a more or less polluted world.

D.A. Huitzing, March 1985

The first draft of this article was read by Mr. J. van den Nieuwenhof, Mr. R.E. de Vringer, Mr. K. Schilder, Mr. J.M. Klaaijsen and Mr. C. Maas Geesteranus. Their remarks have been very helpful in completing this paper.

IV

Suggestions for further reading

- DYNAMICS OF GROUPS AT WORK

  H.A. Thelen, 1954
  ISBN 0226-79474-1

  An application of social science to social action and learning, which combines theory with the insights born of classroom and fieldwork.

- ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN POLITICS

  P. Lowe & J. Goyder, London 1983
  ISBN 0-04-329044-2

  A book dealing with environmental pressure groups - local, national and international - active in Britain. It shows how the environmental movement has grown and developed and it analyses the internal organization and resources of the groups and examines their involvement in politics and environmental planning.

  A group's objectives, the way it is organized and makes decisions and the access it enjoys to the political system, determine the methods it uses to influence the formulation and implementation of environmental policy. This book does not explicitly deal with environmental education.

- GIDS VOOR NATUUR- EN MILIEU-EDUCATIE
  (Guide to environmental education)

  D.A. Huitzing, Amsterdam 1978
  ISBN 90 215 0734 X

  A guide for local voluntary environmental education (EE) groups, in which some theory on EE is given, as well as a summary of possible educational activities. In Dutch.

- THE NEW INDUSTRIAL STATE (Chapter 33)

  John Kenneth Galbraith (1967)

  Education and Emancipation (pp. 377-385)
  This chapter emphasizes the importance of education in modern society.

- ADULTS AS LEARNERS - Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning

  K. Patricia Cross, 1981
  ISBN 0-87589-491-7

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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN. HEEZE, the Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985,

Paper no. 4b

Tuesday 14 May 1985

ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GROUPS *

EE voluntary groups have grown from the structure and activities of the Centrum voor Natuurbeschermingseducatie (CVN): the Environmental Education Centre, established in 1965.

According to its regulations (1969), the CVN is not an ordinary members' association which can be joined by individual members. This clause was confirmed in 1980 when the CVN was officially recognized by the Ministry of Netherlands Culture as an institute for sociocultural adult education. The legal statute of an institute explicitly rules out the recruitment of members. However, the regulations do provide for the establishment of working parties which form part of the General Meeting. Individual nature guides can thus indirectly join the CVN.

From the early seventies onwards various working parties were established, most of them having a local or regional character.

In the province of Limburg the nature guides were able to join a well-structured provincial umbrella organization of EE associations: Nature Action Limburg (NAL). The Limburg Nature Guides Working Party has no independent legal structure.

In the province of Antwerp the nature guides were initially active in and around the city of Antwerp due to the fact that the nature guide courses were held in Antwerp. From 1979 onwards the courses were organized in other places in the province of Antwerp and more centres

* A paper based on the situation in Belgium

were established. As a result, the Association for Environmental Education in the Province of Antwerp (VMPA) was started in 1979. This independent, non-profit organization aims at establishing local branches which fall within the scope of the municipalities. In addition, thematic working parties may be formed, in which people with specific skills work together in certain forms of EE activtities (exhibitions, lectures, courses, etc.).

VMPA is a decentralized association. The provincial board has a co-ordinating and supporting function in relation to the local branches which are responsible for the "first-line EE". Thus VMPA is not an ordinary members' association which can be joined by anyone by paying a membership fee. Only people who are active in the EE field - in whatever capacity - may become members. They are not required to have the nature guide certificate; anyone willing to be actively involved is welcome. (Those who are just interested are referred to natural history associations.)

In the province of East Flanders, too, provincial co-ordination is aimed at. There are now two important centres, Ghent and Waasland, which together issue the provincial calendar of nature walks.

Various regional groups of volunteers are active in the provinces of Brabant and West Flanders. Their organization structures vary widely. Some have no independent legal structure but act as a CVN working party in external relations. Others have their own non-profit organization regulations or operate in close co-operation with a regional or national natural history association (Belgian Nature and Bird Reserves, Nature and Landscape Regional Association, De Wielewaal (= golden oriole), Friends of Heverlee Wood and Meerdaal Forest, etc.). These provinces, too, are gradually showing a tendency to co-ordinate, as in East Brabant, the calendar of walking events.

Adoption of independent legal regulations (non-profit organization) takes place not only on account of the legal regulations of the CVN (which, as mentioned above, rules out the membership of individual members) but also in view of receiving one's own grant from the authorities. In fact each voluntary group, irrespective of its own regulations, remains "working party of the CVN" and, in that capacity, a member of the General Meeting of the CVN which acts as a national umbrella.

P. Stryckers - March 1985

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HEEZE, The Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985

Paper no. 5A "THE TRAINING OF LOCAL EE VOLUNTEERS"

An outline of the training situation in local branches of IVN, the national organization of environmental education in the Netherlands.

Introduction

How does an IVN local branch get people involved in its work?
How do members of a voluntary group prepare themselves for their work?

The answer to both questions may be: TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS.

Many people take an interest in nature and their own environment. The interest of some may grow as more opportunities are offered in this field.

By organizing activities, IVN local branches may reach the latter category of people. The first contact is made during a nature walk, an exhibition with slides and talks or a lecture given at the request of, for example, the board of governors of a school. There will always be people who are keen to know more about the subject and who ask questions.

It is for this category of people that IVN local branches organize informal, brief courses consisting of, for instance, 4 meetings and 4 excursions in the local area.

During such a course, people who take a greater interest tend to get involved in the work carried out by the IVN local branch and are eager to know about the local branch itself.

To some of them it may be an incentive to this work and they may want

to join the local branch. But the question is: how does one join them, is one supposed to have had some education or training, what does the work of an IVN local branch consist of and, notably, how much time will it take?

People who have incentive to the work may become an IVN member by joining an IVN local branch.

The only selection criteria are the following:
- They should be interested in nature conservation and environmental problems.
- They should be prepared to take part in the activities of an IVN local branch.

No special educational level is required and they do not need previous knowledge of environmental matters. The only thing that counts is an attitude of concern and a willingness to be actively engaged in the educational objectives of the branch, whatever they may be. With this end in view, anybody is welcome.

As is clear from Paper no. 4, lots of things happen in a local branch and there is a great deal of work to be done at various levels in order to make the group succeed internally and in its external relations. For this purpose, people with various qualities are needed:
- People who are good organizers.
- People who know about finance.
- People who are in touch with social, political and cultural life in the area.
- People who are skilful with their hands to do the large number of technical jobs such as photography and carpentry for display units.
- People who know about pedagogics and education.
- People who know about nature and the environment.
- And, last but not least, creative people who can contribute their creativeness to the group and the presentation of activities aimed at the general public.

The amount of time available will be different for each member of the local branch. The increasing unemployment is in fact a favourable factor in nearly every voluntary organization. However, to people

jobs, especially those with monotonous jobs that do not offer personal satisfaction, voluntary EE work has proved to be a welcome compensation.

The diversity of the work in an IVN local branch, enabling everybody to do something to their liking, makes it even more remarkable that the volunteers should want to put so much of their time and energy into it! The good cause and direct results of small-scale activities act as an incentive.

Once a person has joined an IVN local branch, he/she will soon find out what he/she can contribute and what kind of work suits him/her well.

At the local level training courses are organized at regular intervals, jointly known as IVN Nature Guide courses, to introduce new members to the IVN local branch, to familiarize them with the work, the objectives and the position gained by the group within the local situation.

This course is aimed at succeeding in all of the above-mentioned objectives. An important aspect is that during the course the participants should form a firmly united group of people who get to know each other and each other's abilities so that they will be able to work together in the activities to be undertaken as a group.
The diversity of the syllabus, the large amount of practical work and the individual work to be selected according to one's own preferences, enable the participant to gain and extend his/her knowledge about his/her abilities and special interests.
Special emphasis has been put on the two social points mentioned above in the last 3 years when the national design of the course was being revised.
Unlike traditional school courses, the training course for EE volunteers is aimed at creating the atmosphere peculiar to the voluntary organization, that is, knowledge and achievement are not given top priority.
This aspect of <u>equality</u> and <u>solidarity</u> of volunteers, working together for the same cause to the best of his/her ability, is likewise reflected in the manner in which the course is organized and carried out following revisions at national level.

DESIGN OF THE TRAINING COURSE

The guide-lines for the IVN Nature Guide course are issued by the national board of the IVN, the national organization local IVN-branches are associated with. The guide-lines serve to map out the objectives to be attained and the quality requirements of the syllabus to be met.
The objectives are divided into 4 categories and constitute the requirements as to quality:

(1) Knowledge objectives : Field biology, biological processes and functions, ecology, nature protection, environmental problems, EE aims and methods, understanding of environmental organaizations and their strategies, understanding of target groups.

(2) Skill objectives : Experience and skill in setting up one's own research, use of materials and methods, planning and implementation of activities together with other people. Social skills in dealing with the public and special learning groups such as school-children, adolescents, etc.

(3) Mentality objectives : Development of the participant's own consistent attitude towards nature and the environment. Together, as a group, seek an optimistic and "ready for battle" motivation for the work.

(4) Social objectives : Finding the right niche for oneself in the work and in the group. Integration of the group of participants and the existing IVN local branch. Together, as a group, seek the right way and forms of co-operation and organization so that the members are motivated and the branch "ready for battle".

The length of the training course varies from 16 to 20 months. This period covers all seasons so that every opportunity for environmental study and educational exercise can be utilized. This time has also proved sufficient for the introduction to the work of the IVN local

branch and the linking up with the group. The course should not be too short as the objectives mentioned above may otherwise not be fully attained. On the other hand, it should not be too long either as it may become heavy going, possibly frustrating the desire to put things into practice as a volunteer. What is more, a course that lasts too long tends to raise the threshold, suggesting more quality and more determination than can reasonably be expected of volunteers.

QUALITY OF THE COURSE AND BACKING UP OF TEACHERS

Quality control and control of the standards set nationally are the duties of a special committee made up of experienced, competent teachers (BCN). The national board has entrusted them with this task. The committee is aided by the Training and Education sector of the professional national bureau which supports the association.
BCN committee members are representatives from each region in which IVN local branches are represented.
Thus BCN covers the entire country and has a view of all IVN branches and courses.
At the national level BCN's duties are as follows:

- Development of the syllabus (course textbook, course leaflets, etc.).
- Extension of didactic training.
- Planning of possibilities to increase the competence of local teachers (organization of special teachers' courses and training of teachers).
- Permanent process of modification and revision of the course by ascertaining whether it will stand the test of practice and adapting it to present-day requirements.

In each region BCN representatives have the following task:

- To help local course teams with the design and planning of the training course.
- To advise the teams and, if necessary, provide them with learning materials and teaching mehtods.
- To monitor the courses in their own region through visits and to give help should problems arise.
- To be present when the participants of the course show their

abilities at the end of the course so as to jointly evaluate the results of the course. The participants are then given their diplomas.

BCN thus has a dual function:
(1) Development of the national course.
(2) Active guidance of the course.
The dual-purpose task guarantees the quality of the committee whose members are, after all, very much in touch with the practical side of things.
In addition, BCN is a link between the professional bureau and IVN local branches as to the provision of materials and services to the courses. Paper no. 7 will deal with this subject.

IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING COURSES

There are about 140 IVN local branches associated in the national IVN. Each year about 30 new training courses are organized, lasting 18 months on average, so that there are now some 50 courses in progress every year. The executive organization of a training course is the responsibility of a branch at local level. Sometimes the course is given by 2 or more local branches which are near to one another. The responsibility for the design of the course, recruitment of participants and its implementation lies entirely with the autonomous IVN local branches.
The local branch selects from among its members people who are to give the course in a combined effort: the course team.
Here, again, the individual team members (teachers) do not have to meet any requirements. Their team-work is seen as organized co-operation, the following abilities being expected of them:
- Adequate knowledge of ecology.
- Proven social skills and experience with and knowledge of didactics.
- A lot of practical experience with EE activities in the IVN local branch and acquaintance with environmental organizations and their target groups.

One of the members of the course team acts as the co-ordinator

responsible for the organization.

The course is given under the auspices of the IVN local branch which has the final responsibility for the course. The branch also recruits participants, is in charge of finances and passes on to the executive team the wishes expressed by the local branch concerning content and planning of the course. As a result, the entire IVN local branch is involved in the course, which thus reflects the reality of the local branch to a large extent.

The rough planning of the syllabus is effected by the course team in close co-operation with the BCN member who monitors the course in that particular region. The help given by this counsellor is of essential importance at an early stage of the preparatory work.
He /she can place his/her experience gained at the national level at the disposal of the team and give them useful advice. In addition, he/she tests the abilities of the course team and, if necessary, reinforces the team by enlisting the services of teachers from other teams in the same area. The BCN member may also consider it necessary to prepare the course team itself for its task by means of a special course.
The training course can start when there is confidence in the team and the syllabus has been approved.

The definitive syllabus is then prepared in joint consultation between the course team and the participants following a number of course meetings.
As a result, the course finally becomes a combined effort of the team and the participants, with everybody being confident of the involvement of the entire IVN local branch and the support, if necessary, of the BCN counsellor. In addition, everybody now feels more confident that the course will be a success: the course meets the national requirements as to quality, it offers a thorough training resulting in an official diploma.

An atmosphere of safety and reliability is created by these aspects, the importance of which should not be underestimated if such a training course for volunteers is to succeed!

SOME MAJOR PREMISES IN THE PLANNING OF A TRAINING COURSE

Preparatory phase

The course usually starts in September for practical reasons. Holidays are over and the school term begins. Autumn, a new season, will soon be here and many people now feel like taking up new things. It is recommended that preparations for the course should start at least 6 months before, as there is a great deal of work to be done:

- A course team is to be formed.
- A rough 18-month syllabus is to be drafted.
- A classroom is to be hired and excursions are to be planned in detail.
- Subsidies are to be applied for.
- Extensive consultations with the IVN local branch and BCN counsellor on the content and quality requirements of the course are to take place.
- Early recruitment of participants is to take place.

Especially the last item mentioned above is essential and should be dealt with promptly to enable potential participants to think about the course and to work out a schedule for themselves.

- Preliminary interviews and, if necessary, selection of participants.

If too many people enroll for the course (30 is the maximum number of participants that can be adequately trained by a course team of 4 or 5 teachers), time should be allocated for a careful selection of participants. There usually is a surplus enrollment.

There are two reasons why preliminary interviews are important:

(1) To put the participant in the picture about the aim and content of the course, special attention being paid to the fact that it may affect the private life of the individual participant. It is most important that the participant knows what he/she is putting himself/herself in for so that there will be no disappointment later on.

(2) To get to know the participants; to find out what he/she expects of the course, what he/she wishes to learn; and to discuss the degree of motivation for the actual work for which the participant will be trained.

The preliminary interviews often result in a self-selection of participants, leading to a workable number of participants to the satisfaction of all concerned.
The selection is important because those with the strongest motivation are given the opportunity to do the course.

Depending on the number of participants, several mentors are approached in various working parties within the IVN local branch. The group of mentors is representative of the various activities in the IVN local branch. The mentors have the following tasks:

- Assistance in excursions which are more or less in their specific field of activity.
- Guidance of a small group of participants in group assignments.
- Individual guidance of a number of participants during the entire learning process.

The mentor is an essential link in the course:
(1) between the IVN local branch and the participants
(2) between the course team and the participants.
In addition, each participant has his/her confidant and personal counsellor should problems arise.

Phase 1 of the course (September - February)

- Soon after the course has started an introduction weekend is organized, and is held in, for example, a nearby youth hostel. The idea is that course team, mentors and participants get to know each other in an informal atmosphere. The IVN local branch may also take part, for example by organizing some specific activities for the participants. In an atmosphere of active involvement the participants are thus once more put in the picture about the course objectives and the branch they may join.

- During the first course block the syllabus mainly consists of introductory information on all subjects. Participants are brought into contact with the wide spectrum of possibilities in the training course and in subsequent activities in a safe, piecemeal manner. Many excursions take place, usually on Saturdays. Being occupied

practically with as yet simple assignments makes the participant more familiar with the work.

- Sometime in December the participants form learning groups focussed on a special subject. The subject is invariably linked to a certain (nature) area so that outdoor assignments can be carried out.
  We call these areas adoption areas. The group of participants adopts this small area of land for the duration of the course. Here the group experiences the seasons, which enables its members to observe all seasonal changes. The object of the exercise is to observe and record, carefully examine and describe and, as a group, present its findings to the other participants at the end of the course.
  Thus various learning objectives are aimed at.

So the first phase of the training course is as yet a matter of "getting the hang of things", examining, getting used to each other and to the methods, discovering one's own particular interest in a subject and one's abilities.
After the first phase an evaluation takes place to enable the participant to make the step towards phase 2.

Phase 2 of the course (March - summer)

The participant now makes his/her own choice, to the best of his/her ability and according to his/her preferences.
This is a slow but gradual process towards the greatest possible degree of self-activity in which learning to co-operate with others plays a prominent part.

- The main feature of this phase in the course is the work done in subgroups guided by the mentor.
  The members of these subgroups together decide what they would like to learn, what subject they want to study in detail. Consultations are held, resulting in a feasible study plan and division of tasks for its implementation.
- Plenary lessons continue at a slightly less frequent rate, the opportunities of springtime being utilized in excursions.
- This phase is rounded off by the group presentations.
  Participants are teaching one another!

An important aspect in the evaluation is the manner in which the members of the group have worked together to achieve the results presented.

Participants are often given special, personal assignments for the free summertime, to be done, for example, during their holidays. These assignments, however, should never be too much of a burden on the participant.

Phase 3 of the course (September - December)

This phase is aimed at the participant's independent action with regard to external relations, that is, the public.
Plenarily a lot of attention is paid to planning of activities, understanding of target groups and educational methods.

- Participants are individually assigned to various working parties of the IVN local branch to gain practical experience. This period of training enables the participant to learn things from local branch members by watching them at work.
- Each participant personally draws up his/her own examination assignment. The participant illustrates a particular aspect of EE work his/her way by submitting a paper on the subject of his/her own choice. Guidance is given by the mentor, one of the teachers or a member of the working party in which the participant has gained practical experience.
  The paper submitted is seen as a proof of proficiency, reflecting the participant's creativeness, resourcefulness, independence, motivation and special abilities. The paper as such is often indicative of the place which the participant may occupy within the IVN local branch on completion of the course.

Final phase of the course (January - February)

During the final phase participants together practise presenting individual and group assignments prepared during the course.

- The course is evaluated. Many discussions are held on the motivation for the work and the desired place within the IVN local

branch at a later stage.

- It is a gradual transition period between being a participant and a full-fledged, active volunteer.

- The course is rounded off by the presentation of the papers to the IVN local branch and other people (relatives).
  It usually is a festive, cheerful occasion in the presence of an important person: the BCN counsellor who presents the diplomas to the participants.

  Frequently a leading resident, the burgomaster, for example, is also invited to attend the presentation of diplomas. The presence of a local VIP is a guarantee of the attention given by the press and the local authorities.

  Thus the course has come to an end and the participant, often still leaning on his/her teacher and mentor for guidance, can take his/her place in the IVN local branch. It is especially in the month of March that the local branch is very busy with the preparation of activities aimed at the general public.

  Obviously the training course does not guarantee that on completion one is master of the subject, so to speak. After the course there are lots of opportunities to put things learned into practice, extending one's knowledge and experience to the best of one's ability and according to one's preferences. More specific, theme-oriented courses and follow-up courses are organized by working parties of an IVN local branch, regional EE consultants and various environmental organizations. Training continues to be a permanent opportunity to improve and further develop EE work.

Sjon Klaaijsen
Amsterdam, 23 March 1985

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Paper no. 5b

Tuesday 14 May 1985

THE TRAINING OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GROUPS *

The needs of local EE volunteers are twofold:
- retraining focussed on knowledge;
- education and training focussed on practical skills.

There are now numerous possibilities of obtaining information about nature and the environment through books, magazines and newspapers, radio and television. In addition, many nature and environmental associations offer a large variety of activities.

Local EE groups can count on support at national or regional level for education and training with regard to practical skills. Moreover, they can make use of the courses offered by organizations specialized in EE.

Nevertheless, many local EE groups organize their own retraining and training activities, attention being focussed on both elements.

(1) RETRAINING FOCUSSED ON KNOWLEDGE AIMED AT AND CONDUCTED BY LOCAL GROUPS

Each local, regional or provincial group of nature guides organizes retraining activities for its volunteers at regular intervals. In winter emphasis is given to lectures and discussions, whilst excursions are organized in spring and autumn. These activities are arranged

* A paper based on the situation in Belgium

independently or in co-operation with other associations. They range from specialized natural history themes (mosses, toadstools, amphibians) and subjects concerning the relationship between society and nature (the relationship between agriculture and nature conservation, critical forest management) to topics affecting society (nuclear energy).

The retraining courses are a supplement to the nature guide course in which only a small number of activities take place, aimed at general ecological education and practical training.

(2) TRAINING COURSES FOCUSSED ON PRACTICAL SKILLS

Independent activities of local EE groups tend to be scarce. Most initiatives are supported at regional, provincial or national level.

Examples of provincially supported activtities are the discussion technique course and the course for course organizers and mentors "Nature in sight", organized by the Association for Environmental Education in the Province of Antwerp. The latter course is aimed at the training of nature guides to enable them to organize a "green" basic course (see text EE programme of local EE groups).

(3) GENERAL MEETINGS, STUDY DAYS

Regional and provincial volunteer groups usually organize an annual meeting for all members, which may or may not be on a statutory basis. These meetings bear elements of a retraining activity (lecture, slide show, film) to some extent. In addition, information can be exchanged or topics of the day can be discussed. The most important aspect, however, is the contact between the volunteers themselves.

A further step may be the organization of specific study days. For example, the study day "Action and education" of the Association for Environmental Education in the Province of Antwerp was held recently. Study days, however, are usually organized at national level (CVN colloquia).

(4) MAGAZINE

Publishing a magazine is an important method of communication for a local EE group. The continuity of the EE work can be ensured by a periodical flow of information. More and more nature guide groups in Flanders are starting their own magazines. The specific structure of each volunteer group (see the text Organization) determines the character of the magazine: provincial, regional, local, independent or in co-operation with a natural history or environmental organization. Magazines in Flanders include:

- provincial: *Erica* (Limburg Nature Guides Working Party), *Galnoot* (VMPA);
- regional : *De Kabouter* (Associated Nature Guides Pajottenland), *VVM - Noordzee*;
- local : *Limonium* (VMPA branch municipality of Wijnegem);
- in co-operation with other associations: *'t Groene Waasland* (Nature Guides Waasland region, province of East Flanders).

P. Stryckers
March 1985

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN.

HEEZE, The Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985

Paper no. 6A "SUPPORTING LOCAL EE GROUPS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL"

Regional EE consultants, employed by IVN, are now active in all provinces of the Netherlands. Their duties may be roughly divided into three major fields:

1. Activities of voluntary groups in the province
2. Formal education and social work
3. The authorities (Municipal and Provincial)

In this paper I would like to try and give you a picture of the work I do as a regional EE consultant in the province of North Brabant for all voluntary groups active in environmental education. The work done in the fields of formal education, social work and authorities will be left out of account just now. Examples of these fields will come up for discussion later on in this conference.

The province of North Brabant has an extensive network of local voluntary groups which are active in environmental education and information of the general public. In addition to 30 IVN branches there are some 55 to 60 other local groups (such as environmental groups, nature study groups, young nature guards, etc.).
Environmental education is the primary aim of the IVN branches.
In recent years, however, the other groups mentioned above are becoming increasingly active in education and information.
Many requests for support and guidance reach the regional EE consultant's desk.
The consultant's duties carried out for voluntary groups include:

- To advise, stimulate and support voluntary groups and individual volunteers who are active in environmental education.

- To stimulate, support and, if necessary, guide the training of officials for these groups.
- To help develop a sound organizational structure for environmental education in voluntary groups and to stimulate and help start new EE groups .
- To supply information and literature on environmental education.
- To advise and support voluntary groups with regard to educational and/or sociocultural planning in the provinces and municipalities.

This is what the formal job description of an EE consultant looks like. However, neat and structured though this job description may be, practice often is a different matter altogether. Local voluntary groups active in EE do not care a bit about your planning. They come for advice, information and support when it suits them. As a result, as a consultant you have to leave ample room in your planning schedule for their usually ad-hoc questions. Each group has its own questions and problems. It makes the consultant's job extremely interesting and varied.
How do the EE consultant's duties take shape in practice? The following are a number of recent examples of contacts I have had with local groups and some examples of projects:

- The environmental group in Gemert is considering a public display of the "waste" subject. They do not know yet how to organize this this demonstration. They have asked me as an EE consultant to come along and put forward suggestions as to the organization and planning of things. I am going to bring them material and literature from my records and together we are going to have a brainstorming session. In addition to the fact that I can bring along and supply a lot of information, my job is also aimed at letting them discover their own potential and their limitations as well.
  I myself call this my "mirror function" in that questions are asked such as: "what do you wish to achieve?"; "what is your target group?"; and "how do think you can succeed in your object?"
  In Gemert it resulted in the organization of an environmental week: a waste exhibition was set up in a local centre, learning material was prepared, a number of schools was approached about projects,

the municipal council was invited to attend, etc.
A public and organized display on a fairly large scale like this one takes 2 to 3 evenings of preparatory work and I usually attend the opening of such an event.

- The network of voluntary groups still continues to expand. As an EE consultant I have been actively involved in the setting up of 9 IVN branches and 7 environmental groups. The setting up and preparatory work usually takes up several evenings as you cannot do it by telephone or letter. There is no standard procedure for it. Especially person-to-person contact is very important and people should have the feeling that they can actually fall back on something or somebody. Together with the preparatory group the best organizational form is taken into consideration and discussions are held on the objective, recruitment of new volunteers, planning of starting activities, plans for the next 6-month period, training sessions, etc. I usually keep in contact with such groups for quite some time until the group has begun to work well.

- Recruitment of new volunteers has been mentioned before. Many groups wrestle with the problem of a lack of man/woman-power. People tend to be enthusiastically active to such an extent that they forget about paying attention to the turnover in their own group and the recruitment of new people. This is very much the case in environmental groups. In addition to the personal contacts I have with such groups, some time ago I wrote a little book entitled "Volunteers needed! A manual for recruitment and introduction of volunteers in environmental groups". It contains all kinds of tips and ideas on image building, attitudes towards tasks, structures of groups, recruitment methods, publicity and initiation of new volunteers.

- Courses for the training of officials for voluntary groups play an important part in the work of an EE consultant. I usually organize such courses in smaller districts so that volunteers do not have to travel long distances. These courses include:
    - Environmental awareness courses (8 to 10 evenings on average).
    - VENEL courses (5 evenings and 1 or 2 active participation mornings) (VENEL = Voluntary Educational Conservation and Landscape Management)

- Courses on "waste" and "acid rain" subjects.
- In-service training for school guides of IVN branches.

In addition, as a consultant I am more or less actively involved in setting up:

- Nature guide courses in the province.
- A teacher's course, which started in March this year and will continue until the end of 1986.
- "Green", basic and nature courses.

The "green", basic and nature courses are organized by IVN branches for the general public. These branches often ask me for suggestions and ideas for the design and planning of such courses and to tell them about experiences gained elsewhere.

- The IVN branch in X is faced with serious conflicts within the board and within the branch. The group's work suffers as a result and if nothing is done about it, the future of the group may be put in jeopardy. The board of the group asks me to act as a mediator. Fortunately such situations are very uncommon, but at the same time I, as a consultant, feel that I am responsible in such a situation for acting as a go-between or peacemaker, if only to ensure the continuity of the group. It is, however, a labour-intensive activity: negotiations are entered into with those involved and we jointly try to come to a solution that is acceptable to all.

- Another example of the duties of a consultant is the stimulation of groups to launch into a new subject. It includes information of groups about such subjects, building up documentation on the subject which has to be accessible to groups, etc. Examples of these subjects are: the problem of waste, acid rain, nature in urban environment, etc.
  In addition to information and documentation activities, I am often asked to help groups on the spot with setting up activities in the form of courses, exhibitions, school projects, excursions, special displays, etc.

- A special place is taken up by the journal of the provincial environmental federation of North Brabant. In this monthly journal I write some ten pages about topical news on environmental education. This, too, is an important source of information for

local groups.

I have given you a number of examples of my work as a consultant for local voluntary groups. The task of a regional EE consultant should be regarded as a regional support function for environmental education with the following global basic principles:

1. Environmental education takes place where people live, reside, work and have their recreational activities - that is, notably at a local level - and is carried out by groups and organizations. The work of a consultant forms a complement to it in an advisory, stimulating, supporting, guiding, etc. capacity.
2. The responsibility for the execution always lies with the executive, local group.
3. As for guidance and support of groups in the execution of activities, the consultant himself is hardly ever active in an executive capacity.
4. The task of a consultant is primarily to be conducive to the activities of local groups - this is a top priority.

Tilburg, March 1985

Arnold Schut

regional EE consultant
in the province of North Brabant

Lessons for teachers

Most teachers in the EE-volunteer world have a great theoretical knowledge. They are brought up with the old fashioned way of teaching.

Practical, self-exploring, ways of teaching is to them an unknown area. To school them in this methods, and let them self practice these materials, BCN and regional boards organize trainings. Partly manned by BCN and other regional EE-volunteers, partly manned by professionals.

During this training the teacher-student gets a lot of information about how to work with small groups of students, how to instruct them, what is the best way of arranging theory and practice etc.

Regional boards organize also weekends for course-teams, to give them the possibility of exchanging ideas, experiences and so on. During these weekends there is mostly a particular, environmental or educational item introduced by a professional.

All these efforts are made to optimalise and update the activities of the local course teams.

Course News Letter

The Course News Letter is invented to get a national forum for experiences, news, developments etc.
Everyone involved with EE-volunteer courses can contribute to this periodical.

It is as a matter of fact a very direct and quick way of informing one another.
In the editoral staff you find BCN-members and other volunteers.
With the help of professionals from the national bureau the letter is multiplied and distributed.
All the team members, teachers and local boards receive a free copy.

Info lessons library

The creative activities of the many course teams and teachers create a huge number of lessons and accompanying material.
To make all these efforts usefull to a greater public, the national bureau has started a library for all these papers and other data.
All the arrangements and paperwork has been made by profesionals and for the next time to come, they protect the library.

CENTRUM VOOR NATUURBESCHERMINGSEDUKATIE v.z.w.
erkende instelling voor sociaal-cultureel vormingswerk

Secretariaat : Ommeganckstraat 20, 2018 Antwerpen. Tel. 03/231.84.81
Zetel : Laboratorium voor Oekologie, K.L. Ledeganckstraat 35, 9000 Gent

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN. HEEZE, the Netherlands, 13 - 16 May, 1985,

Paper no. 6b

Wednesday 15 May 1985

SUPPORT OF LOCAL EE GROUPS IN BELGIUM

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(1) THE SPECIAL TEMPORARY SCHEME "PROVINCIAL EE CONSULTANTS"

The Special Temporary Scheme (STS) is a government employment scheme. It enables associations to employ, on a temporary basis (6 months - 1 year), unemployed persons to carry out tasks which are not within the scope of the day-to-day work of the association. Inspired by the evolution in the Netherlands, the CVN submitted an STS project named "Provincial EE consultants" for government approval at the end of 1983.

Objectives of the project:

Improved guidance and co-ordination of EE work from the national secretariat in the Flemish provinces; new contacts with the sociocultural sector, youth sector and schools; design and supply of teaching aids.

Description of project and tasks:

- 1 Project Co-ordinator (degree in Biology): general co-ordination and monitoring of the project; development of supportive and teaching materials, according to the requirements in the individual provinces;
- 1 Administrative Clerk (higher secondary education): administrative work for the project;
- 5 Provincial EE Consultants (non-graduate in sciences/social assistant/teacher - nature guide certificate required in all cases):

Any team can come and take a look at the information, in case there is relevant information for their course they can take a copy home and save much energy.

All the practising teams are asked to contribute to the library with their, for publication free, interesting material.

Emmy E. Blok-van den Berg
Kalverwei 18, 4854 RP Bavel (N.L.)

* advise, stimulate and support provincial, regional and local EE groups (training, information, documentation);
* promote co-operation between volunteer groups and professional sector in EE (children's farms, nature centres, etc.);
* promote co-operation between volunteer groups and youth and adult activities and schools (education).

Evaluation:

At this moment the STS project is reaching its close. The consultants made numerous contacts between local EE groups and other associations, organizations, services, boards, and so on, especially in the provinces of West and East Flanders. In the province of Antwerp mainly teaching materials were designed and the "green" youth course "Youth and nature" was further worked out.
Obviously - and this is the great difference between Belgium and the Dutch example - the duration of this project is too limited for it to have a lasting structural effect on the work of local EE groups. On the other hand, the project has shown that there is a need for such an organization of consultants; it may possibly have conveyed the latent, as yet unrecognized need felt by the volunteers. The original STS project comes to an end on 15 May 1985, but the CVN has submitted new projects together with the relevant job descriptions. The intention is that provincial (possibly regional) EE groups also submit an analogous project. The work started can thus be continued.

(2) EXHIBITIONS, LEAFLETS, SLIDE SHOWS

Two exhibitions have been worked out by the CVN and placed at the disposal of local EE groups (and other associations).
Subjects: "Nature in your garden";
"Conservation of the environment" (adaptation of an exhibition of the Netherlands Society for the Conservation of National Monuments).
For the "Nature in your garden" exhibition a leaflet was produced, which contains advice on how to introduce more nature in an existing garden, without elaborate digging of the garden.
Both exhibitions effectively ran for 122 days in 1984. So they have

been on loan practically throughout the year. Production of new exhibitions is being considered.

The CVN also produces small-scale EE materials which may be used by local EE groups, for instance:
- slide shows "The heath" and "The woods" with accompanying text;
- cardboard cut-out set "Your own pond" with leaflet;
- nature protection posters "The woods", "The heath", "Ditch and lake", "The dunes" and "Toadstools".

In co-operation with the King Baudouin Foundation EE assignment cards for elementary schools (3rd degree) were produced on the natural area "De Konijnenberg" in Vosselaar. This set contains 30 EE cards, a short introductory slide show and a manual for the teacher. The intention is to work out this system in various places.
Its advantages are: a flexible system which may be extended or adapted as necessary; an inexpensive system for producer and user; the cards may be supplied to schools which can photocopy them.

(3) CVN PAPER

A quarterly periodical on EE in Flanders is published by the CVN: the CVN paper. All participants of nature guide courses receive it free of charge and so do all major local public libraries. Others who are interested in the paper can subscribe to it.

The target groups are: nature guides and other EE volunteers, managers of children's farms, nature centres, etc.; government services for the environment, education or EE, teachers, youth workers, sociocultural associations, etc. The CVN paper contains all kinds of practical and theoretical contributions on EE, which are of national interest. (Local announcements and current events are published in provincial, regional or local newsletters; see text EE programmes.)

(4) EE DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

A documentation centre of EE factual information was set up at the national secretariat in Antwerp. All kinds of leaflets, worksheets, workbooks, and so on, are arranged in thematic order. The documentation centre is aimed in particular at teachers, nature guides, youth leaders and others.

The intention is to set up analogous documentation centres in the other provinces so as to make the material more accessible to the public. To this end co-operation with other organizations and services is needed.

Early in 1985 a catalogue of EE materials was published. It lists all materials which are available or may be consulted in Flanders and the Netherlands.

(5) NATIONAL NATURE GUIDE DAY

Since 1984 the CVN has organized a national nature guide day each year. It enables nature guides - and other EE workers - to meet each other in an informal atmosphere of instruction and recreation, and to acquaint themselves with plans materialized and current activities of local EE organizations.

P. Stryckers
March 1985

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC , Commission on Education, IUCN.)

HEEZE, The Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985

Paper no. 7a I Developing teaching materials and methods and teacher training courses at the national level.

II Contribution to the discussion: 'How to organise and support a volunteer EE-organisation'.

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1. Introduction

In part I of this paper I give a rough outline of the EE-organization IVN, in order to place the professional office, connected to this organization, in its context. In a plan I'll show the organizationstructure round the nature guide course (ngc) on which our renewing-operation for this training course for executives is based. A more detailed contribution to the subject of this part of the paper is given by Emmy E. Blok-van den Berg which will close part I.

In part II of this paper I will explain some motives for the renewing operation in the volunteer EE-work and for the way in which we support the voluntary work. As a contribution to the discussion about the way in which the people are organised for EE, I'll take the freedom to put some remarks and questions out of my own experiences in my work with volunteers as a training consultant at the national bureau.

PART I

2. Some history notes

It has now been 25 years since the Dutch Institute of Environmental Education (IVN) was first founded.
In the beginning it was composed of a few small groups, mainly interested in the education of wildflower and wildlife protection. Their aims were to bring people in contact with nature, its beauty

and to show its value for mankind.
Important support in those days was given by some volunteer school teachers, well-informed in biology and very committed to the idea of the importance of people rediscovering their relationship with nature. Nature camps, nature walks were organised and the ngc started to instruct volunteers about how to bring the environmental message to the public.
Twentyfive years later a lot has been changed. The IVN has become an organization with over 13,000 volunteers working in 156 local groups spread over the country.
There are local and regional boards and a board on the national level, all volunteers. In three working groups, organized on national level, members who are involved in particular parts of the work have united.
The Dutch Schoolbiologists have united in the working group of Schoolbiologists (WvS). They are mostly appointed by the local government and support the local schoolteachers in the field of EE.
The working group for educational conservation camps (WvK) organizes nature conservation activities in summer camps and weekends for youth from 15 to 25 years. During these camps special programs on EE for younger people are running in combination with practical work.
The Committee for Children's Farms is involved in the development and promotion of the idea of the educational Children's and City Farms. These City Farms are mostly situated in an urbanised area where many children are deprived of contact with animals.
Not only have the size of the institute and the quantity of special tasks been enlarged, but also the administration and management have become more and more complex.

3. Professional office

The Institute is supported by a professional office: the National IVN-bureau. In this central office in Amsterdam a professional staff gives support to the IVN-volunteer and to everyone else who is consulting. There are special advisers for the different aspects of the work, e.g.: education at school, camp organising, youth work and other outside-school activities, organisation work, training work.
There is al well-equiped library and information centre. Books, booklets, posters, projects and other material which can be used

in the EE-work are published with the help of the National Bureau. Last but not least, all the administration of the Institute, the organization of national meetings, the public relations and contact with other organizations are done by the National bureau.

4. 'Training' section

In this complexity and amount of work, there is a consultant section, especially for the development of courses, the training of volunteers and the setting up of a training system and structure in the organization.

The main tasks in this section are: administration and help in organization of EE-courses in local groups; developing training materials and methods for these courses; the training of teachers and the organization of support for teacher teams of the nature guide courses.

Our 'training-section' consists of two part-time advisors and a part-time secretary. Sometimes we are assisted by some university students and a special supporting group of volunteers: the national training team.

5. Organization of the support to the ngc (= training course for executives

In the IVN-organization every year more than twenty new nature guide courses are started with an average duration of 1,5 year. So each year we have the final control over fifty training courses for executives with a range of 1200 till 1800 students. In our administration we count almost 400 volunteer teachers belonging to about 100 registrated local group course teams.

Of the 13.000 members of the organization we can say that each year ± 15% are 'in training'.

Not only is this number of importance in itself, but also the impact these training courses have of the renewal and increase of the organization, is significant. These ngc are the bases from what volunteers start in their EE-career, so much depends on its quality.

Three years ago we started a fundamental discussion about the needs in the local EE-group. All members of the organization were brought into the discussion and the results formed the starting points to renew the nature guide course to an up-to-date training course for executives of EE-work.

Much had to be done since the concepts of a new course and a course system were put on paper.
Anyone who is involved with schooling nowadays, will know that renewing education(system) is a process that takes a long time:
preparations (describing, planning, organizing);
changing structures of creating new ones;
instructing executives;
training teachers;
and implementation of the renewing in the organization itself.
To finish my contribution to part I, I'll show the final organization structure of the internal schooling system towards the IVN-institute attempts to grow.

PLAN FOR THE ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE NCG.

- In this scheme it may become clear, that there is a professional line (assisted by selected volunteers) from the national level, (training courses), regional level (teacher courses), local level.
- There is an organization line from the local board; the regional board; the national board, to the training activities on all the levels. (A democratic representative line goes from local-, regional- national board.)
- And there is a democratic representative line starting from the teachers on the local level. Some teachers are chosen by the regional board to form the regional supporting committee (BCN). Together with all the regional BCN-members they operate on the national level as the Supporting Committe for ngc (BCN). This committee is the main executive organ in this structure, mandated by the national board.

The new nature guide book of lessons is developed by the training section from the professional office in cooperation with the BCN. The development of a teacher handbook as wel as the teacher course are subject to the BCN-committee's discussions.

NOTE TO THIS STRUCTURE

The nature guide course on the local level is organized, planned and given by the local EE-group. It is their responsibility in the first place. The whole system is built up to garantee the best

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE INTERNAL SCHOOLING SYSTEM
(towards the IVN-institute attempts to grow)

NATIONAL LEVEL

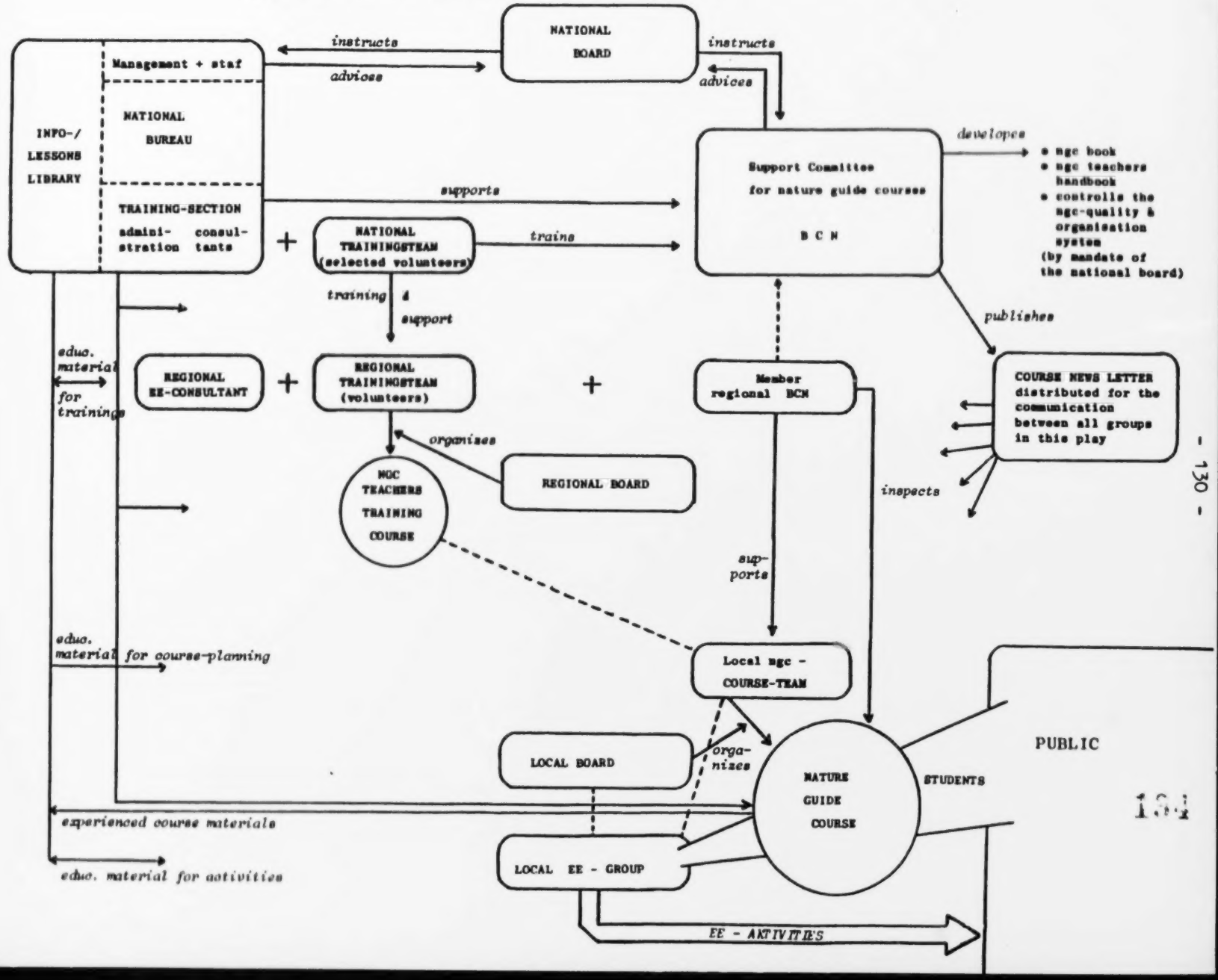
All the regional BCN-members form the National Support Committee for ngc. Selected volunteers from all over the organisation IVN experienced in trainingsaffairs form the national trainingsteam to assist the training-section of the national bureau.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Teachers selected by the regional board form the BCN on regional level. Volunteers assistants of the regional EE-consultant form the regional trainingsteam. Together with the BCN they give the ngc-teachers training corse to alle local ngc-teams in the region.

LOCAL LEVEL

Members of a local EE-group form a course team. After the regional ngc-teachers training course they teach the local organized ngc.



support:
- regional assistance to the course teams
- a permanent system of regional teacher trainings
- a national control system, to keep this structure intact and the course up-to-date
- a national library of information and lessons with input from local groups and selection/advice and information input and updating by the national bureau. To this library all contributions of other EE-organizations all over the world are taken in. On the point of available information 'thinking globally and working locally' is garanteed.
- communication from and to each level is garanteed by the course newsletter.

More information about this project is given in the next pages by Misses Emmy E. Blok-van den Berg, member of the supporting committee for the ngc, delegated from the region N-Brabant.
It is with pleasure that I ask that you pay due attention to her contribution to this paper.

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Development of teaching materials and methods on national level for use in local EE-courses. The coordination of ideas, use and development

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Materials and methods

Because of changing interests of the public, the need for more direct approach, for more practical experience, the course teams are asking for other teaching materials and educational methods. The existing book, originally written as a handbook for the nature guide, remains more and more on the bookshelf.
The 'just talking' teacher becomes an old-fashioned phenomena.

What are the teams and students asking for?

They are asking for a teaching letter more connected with what is happening outside, harmonizing with seasons etc.
Basic knowledge, which gives the teams the opportunity to add facts about a particular part of the country of specific elements they

want to underline.

All these signals of changing reach the more national working EE-volunteers, the national EE-committee and that effects a nomination of commission to develop new materials. To develop a new 'book', if that is the word for what is coming.

Because of the changing teaching methods, the more direct way of learning, teams and teachers need other skills.
A handbook for the teacher follows as a matter of course the new book of lessons. In this book a teacher will find ideas about organi ing his practical, self-exploring lessons, examples etc.
He has to know how to instruct students,what he has to ask to activate the student in his self-exploring learning and so on, to get optimal results.

The new series of 'teaching letters' differ in contents and lay out from the book used nowadays.
A lose-leaf edition gives the teacher or team the possibil ity of using certain parts at a given moment and add data and information they find important.
Working this way creates,during the course,an understandable and accessible handbook or reference work. It prevents the mountains of papers and other information which becomes mostly unaccessible and useless at last.

The new approach of the contents is a thematical arranging, for example according to the seasons and not according the usual biological system. And of course, there will be given a greater attention to environmental problems.

Being developed at this very moment there is only a small part of the new book available as an example.

Changings from local to national level and vice versa

The local practice of an EE-volunteer course is in most cases the source of new methods and developments.
A good team, aware of the needs of their students will allways be trying to adjust the lessons, materials and methods to get optimal results.

A big problem in a volunteer-organization, with many self-responsable local groups, is, to get the good new things above water and bring

them to the national level in order to save energy of other teams and teachers.

The most obvious developments of the last years are - as told above - the disapearing of the 'just talking' teacher and the introduction of self-active learning, self exploring, discussions, working in small groups of students and the accompanying problems of that way of working.

To support and accompany the local courses, and to make good developments more widely known, a member of the national committee BCN (Committee to support nature guide courses) is involved with every local EE-course.
The members of BCN are all volunteers with great experience in producing and organizing EE-courses.
This committee itself is supported by professionals from the national bureau. Support in organizational and secretarial work and in training and up-dating.

The BCN (Support Committee for Nature guide courses)

The committee meets regularly to exchange views and tell each other the latest course news.
Because of the involvement with all the courses, the BCN-members are among the best informed volunteers in the world of EE-courses.
From them you can get the best general view on what is going on everywhere. It is that position that makes them an optimal medium to start new developments and initiate new methods by the local groups.

In order to keep their own knowledge up to date they meet twice a year for a long weekend. That time is used for profound discussion and relaxed exchanging of thoughts and opinions on what is going on in EE-business.

The BCN of course can contribute a lot to the new look of the new book. One BCN-member is a permanent member of the 'new book commission'.

The BCN, because of its involvement with the local courses, is an instrument to safeguard the level of teaching and learning.
This guarding is in daily practice not very obvious but it exists.
An effect of this work is that you may speak of a national course level. That is why a succesfull EE-student gets a national certificate.

Paper 7a, part II

Introduction

The questions and suggestions in this paper correspond with the content of paper 4. A further contribution to the discussion "how to set up a framework for EE-work through volunteers" is given in order to find some starting points on which the support of volunteers could be based.

EE-work analysed into 4 typifications, with implications for a voluntary organization.

1 EE is organized work

There is a necessity for some kind of association in which workers are united.We all have a responsibility and shoud have an opportunity to participate in the creation of meaningful educational processes which will facilitate a positive transformation of our society.So there is reason enough not only to educate groups and individuals in society,but also to create opportunities for EE in which people can participate.To the form in which EE could be organized,this implicates that the association must be within the reach of all and there must be a low threshold for recruitment of new members.

2 EE deals with the environment

Members are involved with the environment.The affection to the environment however,may differ very much to individuals. Formulation of general aims and stratigies to a certain extend are necessary to obtain a common policy.Direction and recognition are important to connect people,but democratic influence for individual members is indispensable.To make the term "thinking globaly" from paper 3 operational in the environmental field, worldview conceptions are needed: a worldview defines social expectations and problems that need solution,it specifies acceptable methods of problem solving and it provides a framework for the organization of social,economic and political activities.To make environmental knowledge available to all members,a data-system,a schooling-system and the exchange of experience are part of the internal organization.

3 EE deals with education practice

Members have (to obtain) skills and tools for education.

Training and support are necessary and so is the possibility to have exercises in praktice.Furthermore a solid methodological and pedagogical framework must be developed so that members can not only acquire,but also participate in the formulation of conceptual tools that will enable them to uncover and analyse current problems,trends and posible solutions and to translate this into their own educational practice.This methodological foundation is the most important aspect of the educational process and is often ignored.

4 EE has aims to public and society

Generally spoken EE-aims shoud be a contribution to a positive transformation of society.But we have to be aware of two limitations to avoid desillusion:

a The very instrument of education could have a big influence in changing processes,but has not the pretention to change society.An exact description of EE is needed and so is a philosophy about its impact.To EE workers it should be clear what they aim for,how they might work,what position EE takes in society and how far its influence can go.

b Any EE-organization has its own limitations. Depending from its size,organization-structure, specialization,tools and so on,each EE-organization has to become aware of its limitationsin capacity and reach within the field of EE.An association of many local groups e.g. has good opportunities to reach people in their living quarters.Therefore community centres and (primary-)schools are good places to start EE for local groups.

For the health and power of EE it is indispensable that the various EE-organisations bring together their forces in a certain cooperation-strategy.For this strategy it is important that each organization knows its capacity,its range of target-groups and its specializations.Far more important than its pretentions are the limitations of an EE-organization as a base to find connection with other organizations.By knowing everyones position within the "EE-movement",each organization can make a better policy,

To members of an EE-organization it should be clear which particular place and tasks their organization takes within the diversity of EE-organizations and which differences,but also which connections there will be with other organizations within the "EE-movement".Through clarity and insight in this diversity of aims and targetgroups of each organization the aims and pretentions of the single groups will become more modest.But on the other hand cooperation will become easier and the feeling can help,that one does not stand alone on the long path,which the "EE-movement",after all,will have to go.

Some motives for a voluntary EE-association of local groups

With the thesis "Educating locally,thinking globally" it became obvious,that there are advantages for EE through local groups. The more EE-activities intervene in local society life, and become part of it,the smaller the distance between the phenomenon EE and the public and the better the effect in the long run.The bettter and the more connected with social life EE takes place,the lower the threshold will be for people to contribute the EE-group.Working in the direct local environment and being organized in small groups with people who are acquainted with the local situation are also motives concluded from the postulates of alternative technology;namely:

reduction of large-scale organization-,production- and transport-systemsinto small decentralized units.And this brings us to the point that ecology itself can help EE in searching for ways how to organize the work and how to find structures for the organization.If our aim with EE is to give a contribution to a positive transformation of society,then our message would be clearer more we are able to serve as a model.

To finish my contribution to the discusion about the the organisation part of EE-work,I would like to compare a traditional "tree-model" for organization structures with a socalled "rhizome-model"

A tree-model is shaped like a tree,with a top and lots of lower branches,all connected with the central stem and which takes root in one particular place in the landscape.

The rhizome-model is shaped like a plant which distributes itself very quickly on favourable places in the wide surrounding by means of rhizomes.From this way of multyplication a wide spread complex of plants arises,which are all autonomous for themselves,

connected with each other and in close contact with the earth. From ecology we can learn that a flexible system with a great adaptability is more succesful in growing and surviving during changing circumstances ,more than a highly organized,strictly structured,fixed system.Anyway,the rhizome-model could inspire those who are willing to meditate on it.

For local voluntary EE-groups I note down the keywords:

+ autonomous
+ selfsupporting
+ independent
+ interconnected.

Professional support to voluntary groups

Apart from the interest of association,voluntary groups have great interest in practical support.Therefore a central connection point is useful.The I.V.N.-national bureau is meant to be such a service office on national level,just as the EE-consultants are on regional level.A summery of tasks,which are there in order to support voluntary EE-groups,is:

-information supply
-organization support(to start off a group to find cooperation etc.)
-administration(as an information service to the public whenever they want to come into contact with EE-groups)
-communication
-international contacts
-promotion(of EE-interest to the government etc.)
-research
-production and distribution of material
-development of EE-methods
-training and advice
-development of policies for EE-stratigies
(in order to give advice on:-targetgroups,-cooperation with other organizations,movements dealing with the same general aims,-cooperation between EE-organizations in order to find common stratigies and to develop a certain allocation of tasks)

It should be obvious that a well equiped central office,manned by professionals could become very powerful among the various

voluntary groups.Therefore it is important that such an office, meant be serve volunteers,is independent and finds a good attitude to deal with the autonomous state of the different groups.This is very difficult,in practice,because many barriers have to be overcome in the relationship between professionals and volunteers.Volunteers are apt to look on professionals as:

-being paid
-being experts
-knowing everything
-being able to give immediate advice

Apart from some prejudices there are inequalities in position, which fact should not be ignored.

In our training section of our national bureau we use the following statements in our attitude and in our support to volunteers.

1 we serve the EE-group in such a way that they can do their job.
2 we don't work for them ,because they are meant to become self supporting:we work with them.
3 we are not the experts who can tell people what to do.Every adult is able to find his/her own contribution to EE.We can facilitate the process of finding ones own way.
4 we are there to help to find answers on questions and problems that arise in the groups.
5 we organize trainingsessions on certain topics which are of interest to the different groups.We invite people to come;it is their decision to participate.
6 in a trainingsession our contribution is: to shape the condition in which people can work and to help them to find their own solutions so that they will become independent decisionmaking,problem-solving,group affairs and working with the public.

Of course we are experts in some way,but important is the message of equality and appreciation of each other ,to find cooperation in the group and an attitude to the public.Of course we have our own vision on people and development,on cooperation,on methods to work with the public.But through working with people we are part of the group and so our vision is point of discussion.In trainingcourses with volunteers one is constantly working on two levels:

1 on the internal question of the group

2 as an example for them of how to work with the public.

We are very aware of the fact that the way we mix with the group, could be picked up as an example.This very point we also bring into the discussion(especially in trainingcourses with teachers of n.g.courses,who are in the same position in the courses they do with other people.)

In sum:in our training,on the one hand,we work with emancipatory models for groupdynamic support and on the other hand we make use of adult education models for EE-curriculum development.

In many of the local groups one can discover renewing influences which are part of the social transformation in society.Making use of our intermediate position between groups,we can bring these points on several places into the discussion.In this way a profesional can help the renewing processes in the EE-association in order to find new skills,tools and methods for EE,which are in tune with the constant changing possibilities of society.

Some of these new topics are:

I the transformation of the expert attitude into a cooperative attitude

In consequence other questions and postitions will transform:

-"How do I reach unknown people with my important message?" will become:
"How do I get into discussion with people on equal base?"

-"My voluntary EE-group is a working group specialized on EE." will transform into:
"In my voluntary EE-group we are together with familiar, reasonable people,striving after the same aims."

-The position of an autocratic board and expert teachers will transform into:
Working with each other in a democratic way and learning from oneanother through doing things together.

II the transformation from "product-centred" into "process-centred" attention.

Some consequences:

-"Information and knowledge will lead to solving problems"
transforms into:
"EE-problems are part of a complexity of processes in our society,so process analysis and process alteration is needed."

- Focussing on short term goals
transforms into:
Starting educational processes which could lead to long-term results.

III The transformation of "how-questions" into "why-questions."

Some consequences:

-"Tell me how to instruct my students to prepare a good excursion for the public."
transforms into:
"Tell me your opinion why excursions can make sense to the public,in order to have a motivation discussion in our group."

- EE precisely described in handbooks with standard methods
transforms into:
A new handbook for the n.g.course with a variety of methods according to different learning styles.People can choose which exersises are of their own interest.

- Learning by instruction is transformed into:
Learning by doing and asking "why-questions" for group discussion and evaluation.

We try to inspire the volunteers to find their own place in EE and to use their own creativity and life-experience to find their own ways and methods for EE.For this it is needed that we leave the expert attitude to think for the volunteers.We must give them the tools for research,analysis,drawing conclusions,formulating aims,developping curriculums,planning projects and evaluation to learn from their faults.
In our vision the process of EE can start,when people stop to wait for solutions that might come and stop to wait any longer for instructions.It really starts when people:

- start to think for themselves. (independent)
- take their own responsibility.(selfsupporting)
- come together with like-minded people to form a solid group to work. (autonomous)
- and find connection with othersto cooperate.(connected)

The greatest satisfaction volunteers can give us at the end of our intervention on their request,is their conclusion:
"We don't need you anymore,we can do it on our own now!"

-o-o-o-o-

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National I.V.N.-bureau,
The Netherlands
May 1985.

CENTRUM VOOR NATUURBESCHERMINGSEDUKATIE v.z.w.
erkende instelling voor sociaal-cultureel vormingswerk

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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOCAL GROUPS - Conference of the North West Europe Committee (NWEC), Commission on Education, IUCN.

HEEZE, the Netherlands, 13 - 16 May 1985,

Paper no. 7b

Thursday 16 May 1985

DEVELOPMENT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL OF TEACHING MATERIALS AND METHODS FOR COURSES CONDUCTED BY LOCAL EE GROUPS *

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(1) NATURE GUIDE COURSE

As mentioned before in the text "EE programmes"**, the nature guide course has been organized officially by the CVN as the national educational institute. However, since local EE groups may be actively involved in the organization and guidance of a nature guide course, this course will be discussed here.

Initially the nature guide course consisted of a series of theoretical lessons in general ecology, plants and animals, and the major types of landscape in Flanders. Field excursions were added to this series of lessons. In addition, the course participants had to carry out a natural history assignment (biotope study) and a practical EE assignment (guided nature walks).

During the period 1979-1982 the course was revised by a special steering group. Since 1981 an extended course model has been organized in several places. Its major guide-lines are:

- the information that can be conveyed in the field itself should not be replaced by a lesson indoors (indoor lessons should supplement excursions, not the other way round);
- the concept of "nature guide" is broader than "guide of guided nature

* A paper based on the situation in Belgium

** Paper no. 2B

walks"; in principle all forms of EE work are worthy of attention, to the best of the participant's ability; on the basis of the choice made, an adapted training period to gain practical experience is arranged;
- more attention to be paid to EE problems.

This extended course model consists of 30-35 indoor lessons, outdoor lessons and training periods to gain practical experience. It takes about one year to complete. The course model appears to full advantage especially in well-developed, properly functioning local EE groups because it requires active involvement of the volunteers (a field lesson requires more guides than a lesson indoors). If a nature guide course is held in "virginal soil", so to speak, the previous course model is reverted to. Combinations of both systems are another possibility (old model supplemented by an EE programme arranged by the local EE group).

At the end of 1983 the new Handbook of Nature Guide Training was published. It is a loose-leaf course handbook that runs to nearly 400 pages. The index is as follows:

1. INTERRELATIONSHIP IN NATURE
   - 1.1. Ecology
   - 1.2. Abiotic factors
   - 1.2.1. Shapes in landscape (geology, pedology)
   - 1.2.2. The waters on earth (hydrology)
   - 1.2.3. Meteorology
   - 1.3. Biotic factors
   - 1.3.1. The animal and its environment
   - 1.3.2. Plants and their environment
   - 1.3.3. Classification of animals and plants
   - 1.3.4. Evolution of animals and plants
   - 1.4. Changing of the seasons
2. LANDSCAPES
   - 2.1. Woods
   - 2.2. Sea, beach, dunes, mud flats, salt marshes
   - 2.3. Heath
   - 2.4. Moorland
   - 2.5. Nature in cultivated landscape
   - 2.6. Nature in and around towns

3. NATURE CONSERVATION
   3.1. Historical review of Flanders
   3.2. Environmental law
4. FIELD TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS
   4.1. Field techniques
   4.1.1. Map reading
   4.1.2. Identification of plants
   4.1.3. Bird-watching in the field
   4.2. Skills
   4.2.1. Excursion leading
   4.2.2. Nature trails
   4.2.3. Slide shows
5. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
   5.1. Background, objectives and proposals
   5.2. Organization, potentialities, infrastructures

LIST OF RECOMMENDED BOOKS

LIST OF TERMS USED AND THEIR EXPLANATIONS

Already in 1984 a second, revised and enlarged edition was published.

(2) "GREEN" BASIC COURSE

These courses (known as "Nature in sight", "Guide to nature", "See-understand-preserve nature") are organized by local EE groups themselves (see text "EE programmes"). The framework of the course was laid down by the steering group mentioned above. The groups taking the initiative in organizing the course each work out their own text. Thus the courses very much reflect regional differences; on the other hand, the texts sometimes differ widely with regard to their contents as well as to the degree of difficulty. The CVN is currently working on a joint text to which local groups can add regional or local information. A manual for mentors and teachers is being prepared.

The programme (syllabus) of a "green" basic course - in an ideal scheme - looks as follows:

1. Indoor lesson: introduction to ecology
2. Indoor lesson: genesis of the landscape in the region (human

occupancy, agriculture, town and country planning, regional geography and history, soil, geomorphology ...)

3. Excursion I (application of 1 and 2; rules of behaviour in nature; practical aids)
4. Indoor lesson: introductory concepts relating to plants
5. Indoor lesson: introductory concepts relating to animals
6. Excursion II
7. Excursion III
8. Excursion IV
9. Excursion V
10. Practical lesson: nature management
11. Indoor lesson: nature conservation, environmental management, personal life style
12. Final session - evaluation of the course.

The course should closely link up with the actual lifeworld of the participants. This is especially important when selecting the excursion fields (near the place where the course is held). One excursion should preferably deal with the planted area in the participant's own surroundings (nature in one's garden, management of parks), playing-fields, esthetics, livability of surroundings in general.

The "green" basic course is meant to be informative (to arouse interest). The participants are not directly incited to commit themselves (French: "engagement") to the support of nature conservation. However, gentle hints are given: the discussion lesson "Nature conservation, environmental management, personal life style" makes the participant think about the effect the knowledge gained in the course may have on his/her future life (style). The practical lesson "Nature management" enhances the feeling of being closely connected with nature, nature conservation and management. Participants are usually also asked to become actively involved - especially in practical things - in their local EE groups. Following the "green" basic course, lots of participants take the next step to the nature guide course, where attention is actually focussed on committing oneself to the support of the cause.

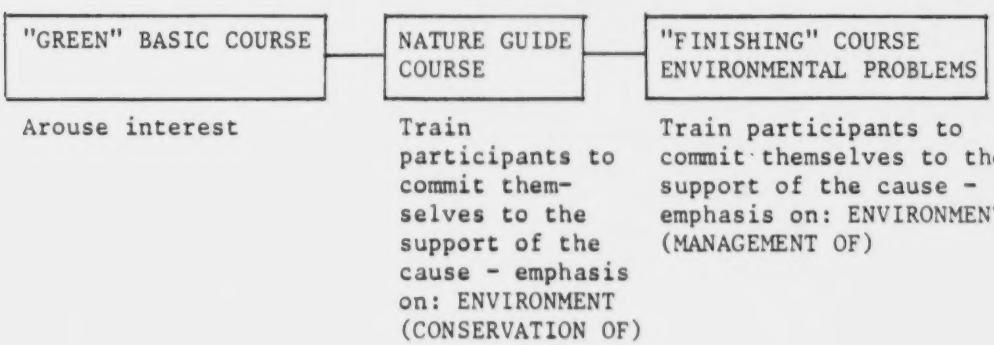
(3) ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COURSE, ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY COURSE

The CVN has been organizing "Environmental law and policy" courses since 1980, which are largely meant to be "finishing" courses of study for nature guides. To this end a course handbook was published: Environmental Law Handbook. This handbook was completely revised in 1985.

From practical experience gained by local EE groups the need has arisen for more information about current problems in one's own surroundings. The nature guide course is mainly aimed at conserving nature; the programme does not allow for thorough instruction in the major problems encountered in one's own surroundings (there are, however, 2 introductory discussion lessons).

The CVN is currently preparing a general "finishing" course of study which should start at the end of 1985. This course should, decidedly, have a practical basis and should point out various ways and means of environmental action. For this purpose, too, a handbook is being prepared by the umbrella environmental organization, the Association for the Promotion of a Better Environment in Flanders. The "Environmental law and policy" course can be integrated in this course, but may also be conducted separately.

As soon as the environmental problems course has materialized, the education of nature guides will consist of the "triptych" shown below (the 3 courses may be taken separately):


"GREEN" BASIC COURSE
NATURE GUIDE COURSE
"FINISHING" COURSE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS
Arouse interest
Train participants to commit themselves to the support of the cause - emphasis on: ENVIRONMENT (CONSERVATION OF)
Train participants to commit themselves to the support of the cause - emphasis on: ENVIRONMENT (MANAGEMENT OF)

P. Stryckers
March 1985

APPENDIX 2

Discussion on May 13th, 1985, following the presentation of papers

(Papers No. 1, 2A, 2B and 3)

Note: This appendix consists of three parts:

- 2.1. Objective and working methods
- 2.2. Statements for use in discussion groups, prepared by the organizing committee
- 2.3. Synopsis of group discussions

2.1. Objective and working methods

(Prepared by K. Schilder)

The papers which have been presented up to now have mainly been introductions to the theme of the conference. The objective is to establish a common level of knowledge of this subject. Furthermore they serve as a 'warming up'.

The next step is to gain more in-depth knowledge and to form an opinion. The following discussion aims to initiate this step. Four possible working methods are suggested to structurize the discussion for participants and discussion leaders. The advantage of these structurizing methods - in particular for extensive topics - is that the discussion can be rapidly focused on what the participants consider most essential. No time is wasted on discussing what should be the topic of discussion.

The following methods are suggested:

General provisions

The discussion takes place in subgroups of approx. eight persons. Each group has a seperate workroom. On the table there are (blank) cards, pens and thumb-tacks.

1. Choice of propositions

On every card on the table a proposition has been written which expresses an opinion on the topic - pro, contra or neutral, in various degrees.

Every participant choses one of the cards with the proposition which appeals most to him/her. Everyone then takes turns explaining her/his choice. Starting-points may be questions such as "Why exactly does this proposition appeal to me ?" or "What questions and objections does this proposition raise in my opinion ?" The others can react.

Finally, all participants together formulate some conclusions.

2. Variation on the proposition game

Several, six for example, propositions are tacked on the wall. Everyone determines her/his position on various propositions: pro, contra or neutral. Then everyone defends her/his choice.

Finally, all participants together formulate some conclusions.

3. Associations called forth by introductions and texts

Every participant gets two cards. They are asked to use both cards to write down a brief reaction - possibly one word - to the papers and introductions. Starting-points are questions such as:

- what appealed to me most ?
- what do I object against ?

Then every participant tacks his or her cards on the wall. Everyone reads the statements and choses one which appeals most to her or him; preferably not her or his own.

Everyone takes turns telling why he or she has chosen that particular statement. The others - including the person whose stetement is concerned - may react or ask questions.

The discussion is rounded off by the participants' formulating some conclusions on the most important findings, if possible attended by arguments on which the conclusions are based. Important questions which have not been discussed may be dealt with later, for example during the concluding forum.

4. Turnstile discussion

There are four discussion groups and four propositions, which have been formulated on the basis of the introductions. Each group has a proposition on a large sheet of paper ('flipover').

Together each group discusses a reaction to their proposition. Which are the positive or negative sides, which are the questions and problems. The results of this discussion are written down on the sheet under the proposition, including arguments.

After some time, for example 45 minutes, the proposition including comments is given to the next group. The first group now gets the proposition of another group, including their comments. The second assignment is to a) discuss the proposition and b) react to the last group's comment.

After half an hour the propositions are exchanged once more. After another twenty minutes the groups alternate propositions for the third time. In this way the propositions and comments circulate among the four discussion groups.

Ten minutes later the first propositions has been returned to the first group, including the reactions of the three other groups to the comments. Each groups now has ten minutes to prepare answers.

Finally, everyone can commnet on the reactions in a plenary round.

2.2. Statements for use in discussion groups, prepared by the organizing committee

1. Unless the message of environmental education is presented in its true prespective, the general public will be nervous of it.

2. Enthusiasm is the only necessary criterion for the recruitment of environmental education volunteers.

3. Enviromental education organized by professionals is preferable to environmental education organized by volunteers, because professionals are better prepared to do the job.

4. Social and educational thinking and skills are more useful than ecological knowledge.

5. Local environmental education groups should create their programme rather on the basis of actual environmental events than stick to a fixed programme prepared long ago.

6. Environmental education is about helping people to learn how to make choices and not about telling them what to think or what to do.

7. Environmental education aimed at the general public without proposals for a personal contribution makes no sense.

8. Environmental action without environmental education is like sowing without soil.

9. Volunteers learn more from eachother than from specialized teachers.

10. Target group analysis is more important than ecologically sound contents.

2.3. Synopsis of group discussions

Group 1.

This group had a proposition game discussion on five propositions, followed by a discussion about the topic: "does environmental action has to be part of environmental education ?"

Concerning this subject the group came to a affirmative conclusion. Furthermore group 1 also states that the planning of environmental action and the use of different action strategies are important subjects for training courses for EE-groups.

The following reactions were heard to the five statements:

No. 4 "Social and educational thinking and skills are more useful than ecological knowledge"

The group thought this a difficult statement to discuss, because it depends on the situation whether you need ecological knowledge or not. Sometimes it is more useful to have educational and social thinking and skills, but in other situations one absolutely needs ecological knowledge.

No. 1 "Unless the message of EE is presented in its true perspective, the general public will be nervous of it"

Unclear in this statement is what is meant by "its true perspective". Does it have to do with the fact that the educator may have a different aim in mind with his educational activities than his audience ? Or is it related to the various topics that can be used as contents in EE ?

It was agreed that it is not always necessary to inform people specifically in advance what subjects you would like to bring forward in education. However, the educator should keep a general line in his mind.

Education should offer a perspective in the sense of leading to activities.

No.3. EE organized by professionals is preferable to EE organized by volunteers, because professionals are better prepared to do the job.

The group could not reach consensus on this statement. Those who agreed with the statement said that knowledge is the basis for EE and professionals are better trained and have more knowledge about EE.

On the other hand those who did not agree with this statement argued that it depends on the tasks and functions of professionals and volunteers. In some situations a professional would not be preferable to a volunteer, for example when

extensive knowledge is not necessary but the way how to deal with other persons is important.

No. 8 Environmental action without environmental education is like sowing without soil.

The group agreed on this statement. It is a fact that action and education are closely linked.

No. 9 Volunteers learn more from eachother than from specialized teachers.

The discussion of this statement resulted in different points of view. Some said that lots of people have learned more outside school than inside. Furthermore every volunteer brings a lot of knowledge in the group, that can be shared with others.

On the other hand it is doubtful whether voluntary groups will reach higher levels without a teacher who can bring in new facts and who can invite people to look at things in a different way.

Group 2

The second group chose to discuss a statement of their own making, saying that "the education of decision-makers is a myth. Their decisions do not follow from their knowledge alone, but mainly from the interest they represent and defend."

The following conclusions and questions resulted from the discussion:

1. In environmental education it is necessary to identify different target groups, including decision-makers, and to start "where your learners are".

2. What is man's position in nature ? An internal contradiction in environmental education is that people are part of and integrated in the very system they are trying to change.

3. Knowledge acquired through environmental education is not the only way to bring about behavioural change. Economic circumstances as well as economic knowledge may cause changes in behaviour too.

4. To realize aims as mentioned in the World Conservation Strategy action by all is needed at personal and local level.

Furthermore group 2 also gave their opinion on a number of prepared propositions:

No. 1 "Unless the message of EE is presented in its true perspective, the general public will be nervous of it"

This statement is true, but the EE-message should be a balanced

and realistic one, otherwise the results might be negative.

2. Enthusiasm is the only necessary criterion for the recruitment of environmental education volunteers.

It is necessary to correct this statement. Enthusiasm is a necessary condition for environmental education, but insufficient. One also needs involvement, capabilities, knowledge and skills. Too much enthusiasm might even be dangerous, when it leads to losing touch with socio-cultural reality.

3. Enviromental education organized by professionals is preferable to environmental education organized by volunteers, because professionals are better prepared to do the job.

The contradiction between professionals and volunteers is not a real one. Much depends on personal qualities and on the target group. For instance, EE in the classroom, as a part of the formal school system, is a job for professionals.

Professionals and volunteers work complementarily. Integration of professionals into a voluntary group could endanger the activities of this group, when the result is that volunteers leave the work to be done to the professionals. On the other hand professional input is sometimes needed to guarantee the continuity of EE-activities, for instance in the case of the management of a visitor centre.

4. Social and educational thinking and skills are more useful than ecological knowledge.

This statement is untrue, because the message of EE is an ecological one. However, the ecological knowledge of course has to be placed in a social context. Social thinking and educational skills are useful and even necessary means for EE.

8. Environmental action without environmental education is like sowing without soil.

This is a correct statement, although EE sometimes must be organized at very short term, when there is a direct threat to one or another much valued area.

Group 3. A *)

No. 2. Enthusiasm is the only necessary criterion for the recruitment of environmental education volunteers.

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*) Somewhat to my surprise I found two "groups 3" reports in my papers. As both are worth taking note of, I decided to include the two of them. They are here called 'group 3 A' and 'group 3 B'. (Remark DH)

There was a balanced response to this proposition. It was suggested that any voluteer who was not enthusiastic would not do a good job. If knowledge of natural history was lacking, then this could be provided as part of the volunteer's training course. However, several people thought that some limited educational and ecological knowledge should also be a criterion. Furthermore, there was major criticism of the statement because it did not mention the personal skills needed to be an effective teacher or communicator.

No. 3. Environmental education organized by professionals is preferable to environmental education organized by volunteers, because professionals are better prepared to do the job.

Only one person in the groups supported this proposition immediately. However, there was some discussion as to what is a 'professional' and what is a 'volunteer'. In general, the role of the two was seen as different. Essentially, the professional was seen as an administrator and supporter of EE activities, whereas the volunteer directly works with the target audience. Professionals were highly valued for the continuity they give to activities, their experience and the status EE has been awarded thanks to them.

No. 4. Social and educational thinking and skills are more useful than ecological knowledge.

The meaning of 'social and educational thinking and skills' had to be explained first before voting could take place.
Those against the proposition thought that a degree of ecological knowledge was essential if individuals were to become competent to make ecologically sound decisions.
However, the opponents of this view stated that unless knowledge could be communicated to people in an appropriate and relevant way, it would be of little value.

No. 8. Environmental action without environmental education is like sowing without soil.

As this is a meeting of EE educators, it was to be expected that everyone would agree. However, it still managed to generate discussion. It was stated that all people need to understand WHY certain actions are taken. If not, the action may at best prove fruitless and at worst be counter-productive as it may generate hostility.

There was some support for the view that action which generates a lot of publicity can arouse people's interest and generate the desire for an educational programme.

No. 6. Environmental education is about helping people to learn how to make choices and not about telling them what to think or what to do.

There was general agreement that it would be wrong for environmental educators to pontificate about how the environment should be protected. The record of 'experts' in other fields did

not inspire great confidence in 'experts'. It was therefore generally agreed, that the emphasis of education should be on presenting situations in such a way that people could then make a responsible decision. Once that decision had been made, educators could tell people how to implement the decision.

No. 5. Local environmental education groups should create their programme more on the basis of actual environmental events than stick to a fixed programme prepared long ago.

It was generally agreed that a local EE group should present a programme of activities to the community, but that within the programme there should be room to respond to actual events as they occur. In other words, a programme should be flexible.

No. 7. Environmental education aimed at the general public without proposals for a personal contribution makes no sense.

Again it was agreed that to offer people education about important issues, without showing how the individual could become more involved, could be frustating and counter-productive.

Group 3 B *)

The discussion did not end with definite conclusions but with the following questions and short statements.

The goal of EE was well formulated in lecture 2A. Questions at the start of EE are among others: What makes people change their ideas, values and world views ? There are so many reasons for doing so ! There cannot be one "best approach" in environmental education, there must be several. EE should not be seperated from people's daily life. We must be more alert in choosing different target groups for EE.

By what means is it possible to involve the adult population in a positive way in issues regarding the environment ?

Most adults are involved in specific problems regarding their daily life, but usually not in global problems. Encouragement to start thinking about environmental problems might be restricted to situations in which people see advantages for the solution of their own problems.

Almost every area can be used in EE, but an educator needs more knowledge and experience to make an ordinary agricultural or urban environment interesting, than a rich natural area.

Understanding and appreciation of the urban environment is of major importance in industrial society. More emphasis should be placed on this.

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*) See remark on page 154.

To expect environmental responsibility of the general public might be wishful thinking. The best thing to do is to start on a small scale, for instance by informing your neighbours. If you can do that, you might be able to reach the whole town. So the first and most important question is: how do you inform your neighbours ?

A question with regard to local EE-activities on a voluntary basis is: is it possible to separate environmental education from general environmental protection activities ? And to what extent can volunteers be trained, guided and stimulated to work professionally and still remain volunteers ? On the other hand specialists can be a disadvantage in EE, at least locally.

A holistic approach in EE might be difficult, but it is possible and necessary, not in the least for voluntary groups. However, such an approach is not easily translated into educational activities, because people cannot learn everything at once.

How can we make sure that information on environmental education can be transferred to interested bodies in other countries, so that others can make use of it ? We need examples that can be followed of successes in changing opinions and activities of people in North-West European countries in the direction of a feeling of more responsibility towards global environmental problems. In general we know too little of the effects of EE, nor of changes in knowledge and attitudes caused by EE.

Group 4

Group 4 has made remarks on the aims of environmental education and on the process of education. The discussion was focused on the second group of remarks. In the opinion of some members the WCS is a good starting point for EE, but the question is how to translate these abstract ideas into concrete learning activities at local level. Others thought it might be better to start at local level and to generalize from that level. However, this generalizing will not be easy because it means dealing with problems that are uncommon to the public. EE necessarily embraces political education, because one has to supply people with the skills they need in order to influence the political system.

Group 5.

The major points discussed are the following:

It seems that in the field of environmental education major and especially traditional nature conservation organizations will be left behind by newer organizations. Different aims may explain this different interest in education, as nature conservation organzations put the emphasis on nature conservation and the newer organizations on involving more and more people.

How do we influence decision-makers ? This may be different at national and at local level. Local issues may be used at local level. Objectives need to be very clear. When your objective is to influence politicians, go all out for it and tailor your programme to this objective.

How do we make organizations more effective ? It is necessary to clarify objectives and to develop a strategy. Further 'needs' are recruiting, advertising and persuading, as well as linking up with similar groups.

APPENDIX 3

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